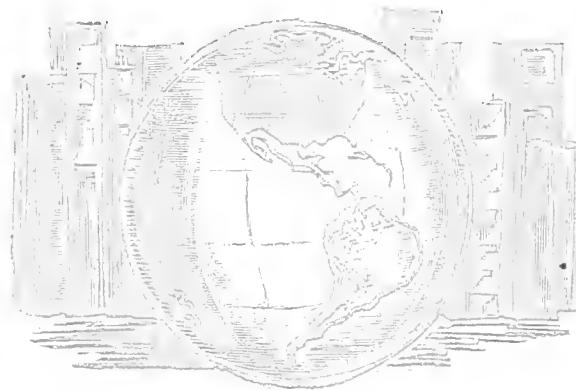


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BELIEVE IN HONESTY. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF AND YOUR OPPORTUNITY. KEEP YOURSELF WORTH ALL THAT YOU CAN. HOLD YOURSELF AT THE HIGHEST PRICE. BELIEVE THAT YOU OUGHT TO BE SOMEBODY IN THE WORLD.

IT RESTS WITH YOU TO LIVE YOUR LIFE WELL. WE HAVE NOT OUR CHOICE TO BE RICH OR POOR, BUT WE HAVE OUR CHOICE TO BE WORTHY OR WORTHLESS.

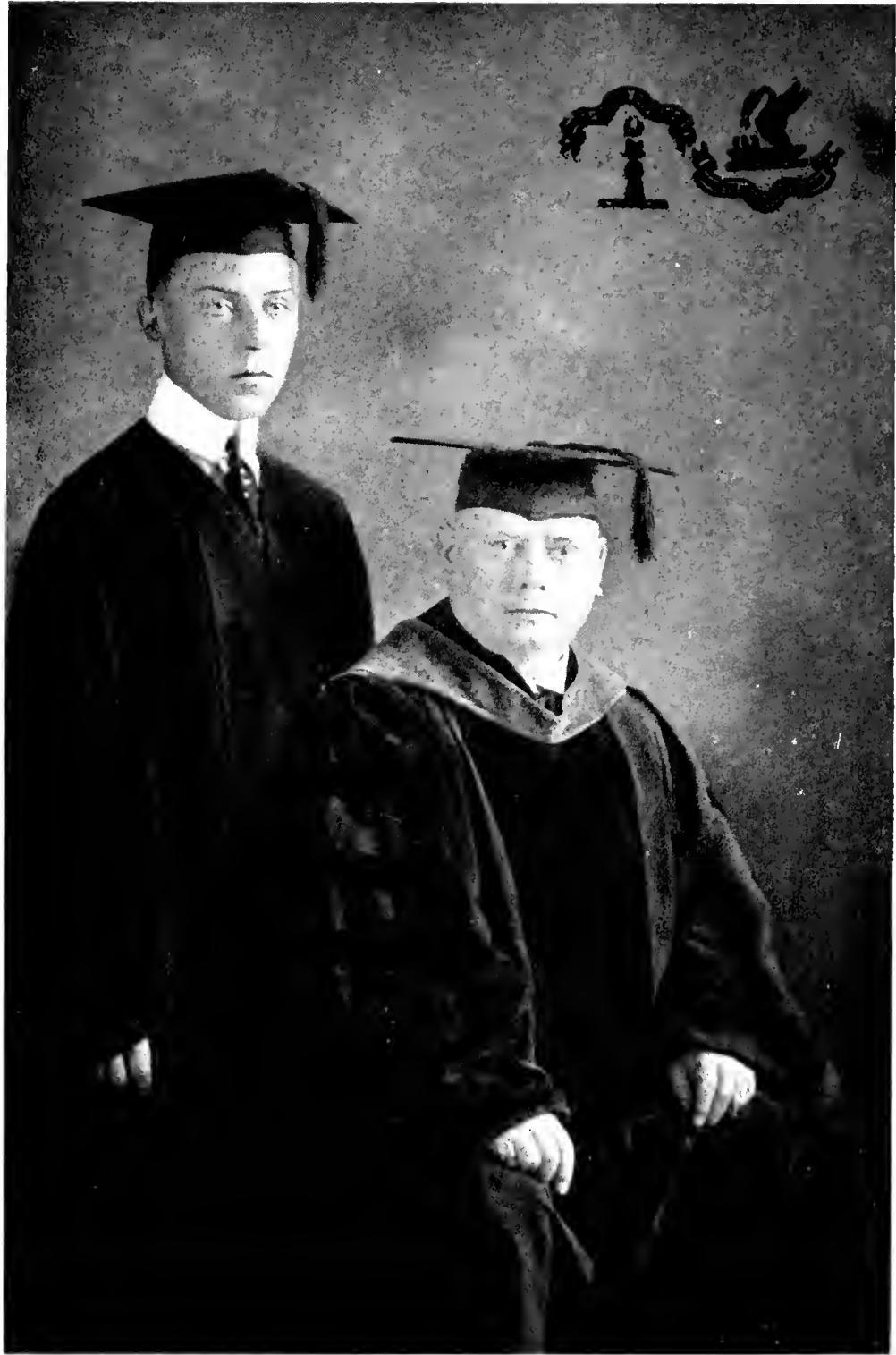
BELIEVE IN CLEAN LIVING. STAND ERECT AND FEARLESS. TAKE THE BEATEN WAY, FOR THE END IS PEACE.

KEEP YOUNG. KEEP INNOCENT. INNOCENCE DOES NOT COME BACK; AND REPENTANCE IS A POOR EXCUSE. APOLOGIES ONLY ACCOUNT FOR THAT WHICH THEY DO NOT ALTER.

# **LETTERS TO MY SON**

**PRINTED FOR  
PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY**





OUR CLASS OF '13

# LETTERS TO MY SON

*By* WILLIAM GIBSON



VOLUME I



CLEVELAND  
THE CAXTON COMPANY  
MCMXVII

WILLIAM  
MURRAY  
WILLIAM

# FOREWORD



To WILLIAM LAWRENCE GORDON GIBSON.

MY DEAR BILL: During the years you were in school at Charterhouse we kept up a regular and chummy correspondence.

About the time you came home to Pittsburgh and entered the Institute of Technology, I happened to be called to Cincinnati to pay my last tribute of respect to an old friend, Mr. W. J. Murphy, Vice-President of the *Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific Railway*.

On my arrival at Cincinnati almost the first individual to be encountered was Professor F. Paul Anderson, who had come there from Kentucky on the same sad errand which brought me from Pennsylvania. Anderson and I were old and intimate friends, and we went to the funeral together and sat in the same pew.

The Reverend Father conducting the service had been devotedly attached to Mr. Murphy who during his life was an excellent and deeply religious man, and had been active in church and charitable work.

In delivering the funeral oration the reverend gentleman was greatly agitated, and got quite mixed up in his eulogy. As a matter of fact it had neither beginning nor ending, and the poor man's English was past human understanding.

After leaving church Professor Anderson and I very naturally had remarks to make, and in an unguarded

## FOREWORD

moment I said, "Paul, I could preach a better sermon myself." He was quick on the trigger and said at once, "I have been asking you for many years to come to Lexington and speak to our boys. Now you must come. I want to hear your sermon."

The connection between our keeping up a regular correspondence while you were in school in England and my going to the funeral of an old friend in Cincinnati may not at first blush be apparent, but nevertheless there is a connection and a quite natural and real one, as you will see.

I thought a good deal over Professor Anderson's renewed invitation, or rather command, as he finally put it, and reached the conclusion that, while it was true, taking it up would involve a good deal of work and time, in it I could see the possibility of rewriting my letters to you, as a schoolboy, in quite another form of course; and hence these papers, read before the students of the College of Engineering and the Department of English at the State University of Kentucky, are first and foremost open letters to you, and they were written during the years you were in the School of Technology, the University of Pittsburgh, or the Harvard Law School. But for the circumstance above narrated, there is little probability that they would ever have been written, and they are the product of idle hours.

Not the least part of the pleasure this work has given me has been the previous discussion of the different subjects in an informal way around our own dinner table, with Mamma, and Dorothy and you, all chipping in, entirely unconscious of the motive I

## FOREWORD

had in turning the conversation into any particular channel. And believe me, to "turn the conversation" in this house is an undertaking compared with which, even the passing of a camel through the eye of a needle is simplicity itself.

When putting these papers into this consolidated form, it occurred to me that there were a few odds and ends of reminiscences and reflections — nothing at all of value, neither fish, flesh, fowl nor good red herring — a sort of potpourri of men I have seen and known, and things I have heard and thought — which might be preserved, and these by right of age are given first, although they were quite an afterthought.

\* \* \* \*

In introducing these reminiscences it is well to say that through the pages you will find a frequent reference to the sentiments of the British and American people regarding each other. It would be quite impossible to set down my recollections without such reference because one of my earliest impressions of the United States was of a country largely populated and entirely dominated by a race of Irish Kings who were ready at any moment to launch an expedition for the capture of the British Islands. That the country contained a few native born, long descended, educated and cultivated Americans I realized, of course, but they were as a subject race. The Irish Kings held almost unchallenged sway. They were courted and deferred to by both political parties. They influenced National and State elections. They controlled the government of all our great cities. Their political influence was quite as much out of proportion to their

## FOREWORD

voting power as is that of the labor element in the present day, and as individual citizens their personal worth was distinctly less. The modern labor unions represent producers. The Irish Kings were largely parasites representing little of economic or national value.

So there is nothing new about minority rule. That smooth old Connecticut Yankee, P. T. Barnum, many years ago sized up the situation in a familiar expression. So great was the power of the Irish Kings that an indiscreet reference during the campaign of 1884 by one of Mr. James G. Blaine's supporters, to "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" cost that statesman the Presidential election.

\* \* \* \*

The change which in recent years has come about in the sentiment between the English and American peoples is second in value and importance only to that between the North and the South, and it is due to the same reason — that they know each other better.

In view of this happily changed condition it might be well for all Englishmen visiting this side and all Americans visiting the other to avoid critical remarks until they at least get "the hang of things." It is not for the one to criticise the other, it is rather for each to understand the other's view. For my own part, after a lifelong acquaintance with both sides, and having a good conceit of myself as becomes a Scotsman, I assume the right to sling a free and vagrant pen and with the most public-be-damned indifference speak of either side without fear of incurring the slightest risk of giving offense.

\* \* \* \*

It is needless to say that these letters are written, first to you out of my heart's heart, and for a few men

## FOREWORD

whom I esteem, and are not intended to go beyond that certain small circle of friends whose criticism will be at least sympathetic, and whose approbation all the satisfaction I care for or could desire. I trust all will bear with the asides and digressions, keep what may be found worth keeping, and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.

I may not always be clear as to dates, but the events are given in chronological order as far as a not too reliable memory will permit.

It is singularly unfortunate that I made no memoranda of things as they happened, and more so that I did not make a habit of preserving letters. A few which have survived by finding their way into the old scrapbooks or into one of my old tin boxes are given. I did attempt many years ago to keep a diary, but my efforts soon convinced me that there are mighty few days in the year on which a man does anything worth recording.

It is true that for me to attempt at this late day to set down from memory any record of men I have known or even met is like unlocking an attic trunkful of unrelated recollections and incidents belonging to a past generation.

Nevertheless there are many recollections, none of them of any great moment to be sure, that might interest you, and no matter how halting and disconnected the story may prove to be, it is here set down for you, and you have the key to all names not given.

Each incident is related just as it happened, according to the best of my recollection and with malice toward none.

## FOREWORD

Many which I have already told you will not be given here lest certain people or their descendants or next of kin, might think they saw in them a right of action against both the publisher and myself.

\* \* \* \*

My thanks are due to Mr. C. E. Postlethwaite of Pittsburgh, for his generous assistance in arranging the illustrations.

I am glad also to record my indebtedness to my friend, Professor A. St. Clair Mackenzie (Glasgow and Oxford), Head of the Department of Literature in the University of Kentucky, for much valuable aid in reading this proof.

Professor Mackenzie is a scholar in the real, but too little understood sense of the word among us. It may be said of him as was said of Goldsmith's parson:

"And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew  
That one small head could carry all he knew."

I take this opportunity also, to express my appreciation of the people of Kentucky, looking back over a long period of years. The old spirit of hospitality flourishes, and in spite of the new note in our civilization and social life, their pride of birth and of exclusiveness remains undiminished. I would express in particular my grateful sense of the hospitality, the geniality of Professor Anderson, Mr. R. C. Stoll, and of my many friends in Lexington.

My relation with these men and with Lexington is one in which I have taken, and will continue to take no small pride, and I trust that you, on your own behalf, will not fail to maintain it.

1509 Shady Avenue,  
Pittsburgh, Pa.  
December, 1913

BASHI

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## **LETTERS TO MY SON**



# LETTERS TO MY SON



## LETTER I

QUEEN AND CRESCENT

**I**N 1881 when the English company leased from the City of Cincinnati its railroad running from Cincinnati to Chattanooga, the president of the operating company, the *Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas Pacific Railway*, Mr. John Scott, moved his headquarters from Chattanooga to Cincinnati.

Cincinnati is the only city in the United States which is the owner of a railroad. It is true that there are several State-owned railroads, notably the *Western and Atlantic* which was built by the State of Georgia and is leased to the *Louisville and Nashville* and now forms part of that system.

The English company was frequently referred to as the Erlanger Syndicate, because prominently identified with it was Baron Erlanger, a Parisian banker. The controlling interest, however, was held in London.

Baron Erlanger had married Miss Slidell, a daughter of Mr. John Slidell of Mason and Slidell fame. Mr. Slidell was a native of New York and a graduate of Columbia, but as a young man had removed to New Orleans and taken up the practice of law. He held many important offices and entered the United States Senate in 1853 but resigned when Louisiana seceded in 1861. In September of that year he was appointed,

## LETTERS TO MY SON

in association with Mr. James M. Mason of Virginia, a commissioner of the Confederate States to France. The two commissioners ran the blockade of Charleston and sailed from Havana on the English steamer *Trent*. Captain Wilkes in command of the U. S. S. *San Jacinto* intercepted the *Trent* at sea and arrested the two commissioners. It has been related that when they were taken aboard the *San Jacinto*, Miss Slidell,\* who accompanied her father, promptly slapped Captain Wilkes for what she regarded as his impertinence in interrupting their voyage. They were taken to Boston and imprisoned at Fort Warren, but were released on demand of the British Government and permitted to proceed to Europe. The United States accepted England's demand as an adoption of the American doctrine which denied the right of search. This incident is known in history as the "Trent affair."

Erlanger's personal representative in the United States, Mr. Charles Schiff, married Miss Mamie Burch of Nashville, a daughter of Mr. John C. Burch who had been Secretary of the United States Senate, and thus we see that there is nothing new in matrimonial enterprise about our Hebrew friends, for both Erlanger and Schiff were full-blown members of the tribe of Ephraim or Manasseh, or one of the other tribes of Israel which got lost in the time of the Assyrian Empire.

\* \* \* \*

As my old friend Joe Moses used to say "There are no flies on our people." A teacher was intent on the lesson, and continued impressively:

"And vast swarms of flies descended on the land, and came into the houses of the Egyptians and cov-

\*Her granddaughter became the wife of Major Marchand of Fashoda fame.

ered their clothing and their tables and all their food, but there were no flies on the children of Israel."

A small boy from the rear of the room interrupted:  
"Please ma'am, and there ain't now either."

\* \* \* \*

Schiff had a nephew, Sydney, an old Etonian but an insufferable bounder. Sydney was quite unlike the usual Etonian whose dignity is so natural that it never occurs to him to wonder whether he is dignified, much less to assert it to others. So one may be an Etonian yet not of Eton. Sydney's mother was a daughter of the Earl of Clanricarde, and the young man did not hide that light under a bushel. He said: "My father may be an old parvenu, but nothing can alter the fact that my mother is the daughter of a peer of the realm!" Sir Walter makes Baron Bradwardine say to Captain Waverley, "Rank and Ancestry, Sir, should be the last words in the mouths of those of unblemished race."

It might be said of Sydney, as an uncommonly clever woman remarked regarding a certain so-called society young man whose name will readily occur to your mind, "that he had all the qualifications of a gentleman which could be acquired, *but none of the instincts!*" That remark is worthy of La Rochefoucauld. A gentleman is solid mahogany: the fashionable man is only veneer. It was James the First who remarked, "I can make a lord, but not a gentleman."

\* \* \* \*

The Company owned the *Alabama Great Southern Railway* running from Chattanooga to Meridian, Miss., and continuous lines west from that point

## LETTERS TO MY SON

through Jackson and Vicksburg, Miss., to Shreveport, La., and on to Marshall, Texas. They built the *New Orleans and North Eastern Division* from Meridian into the City of New Orleans, and thus brought into existence what afterward became known as the *Queen and Crescent* system and Mr. John Scott was its first President, and the plan was of his creation.

Mr. Scott was an Englishman and a Roman Catholic, was educated at Stonyhurst and at church schools in France, and spoke French as well as he did English. He was a devout Catholic and loved his church and her traditions with that love that casts out fear. He was a most energetic and hardworking man and kept himself in intimate touch with every department of the road. He was a good man, but the master quality of mind — good judgment, or sense of proportion — was not his strong point. He was too blunt and honest. He was a transparently square man; to him all tortuous things were a torment—certainly a non-Jesuitical characteristic. A spade could never even for argument's sake be a shovel. He and Schiff had occasional disagreements, and they grew bigger and more frequent until a condition developed akin to that of the tarantula and the scorpion.

\* \* \* \*

There were two rivals for a beautiful girl's hand and they hated each other cordially. To one of them came a fairy saying he could have any boon he desired and whatever he had his rival should have in double portion. Naturally his first wish was for a barrel of money.

"All right," said the fairy, "but your rival will get two barrels on that wish."



MR. JOHN SCOTT



"Stop a little," said the first, "Perhaps you'd better not give me a barrel of money. I'd rather you would make me totally blind in one eye."

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Scott did not see, and perhaps didn't care, that in measuring swords with Schiff he was betting against a certainty. He had nothing like a sporting chance. It is all very well to be brave, and certainly John Scott lived and died without ever having the slightest notion of what the word fear meant, but when one goes out with a pea shooter or a flobert rifle it is not the part of wisdom to engage a fellow armed with a machine gun. It may be magnificent, but it is not war.

\* \* \* \*

As a young man Mr. Scott was a clever boxer and a splendid all round athlete. In 1871 he held three English amateur running championships, a half, one mile and four miles, a record which in these forty-five years has never been duplicated.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Scott finally resigned and accepted the Presidency of the *Colorado Midland*. It was on that railroad that my friend Mr. A. L. Humphrey, now the managing director of the Westinghouse Air Brake Company, was appointed Superintendent of Motive Power by Mr. Scott, and they were devoted friends until Mr. Scott's death. The fact that Humphrey and I served under Mr. Scott has been a bond between us.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Mr. Humphrey has put part of his own experiences into print for the benefit of those who are following him, and his generous appreciation of little things I have written from time to time compels me here and now to say to him in these words of Tennyson:

“You found some merit in my rhymes,  
And I more pleasure in your praise.”

\* \* \* \*

There has been much discussion as to who was the author of the name “*Queen and Crescent*,” and where so many had a voice in the selection it would be quite unjust to give any one person full credit for it — not that any particular credit attaches to it, the obvious reference, of course, being to Cincinnati, the “Queen” City — the Queen of the West as described in Longfellow’s beautiful lines, and to New Orleans — the “Crescent” City. The name just grew, like Topsy, out of endless talk and a multiplicity of suggestion, for all hands were free to offer an opinion.

\* \* \* \*

In those days everybody spoke about the Civil War and fought it over and over.

Take the officials of the road at that time. The Secretary and Treasurer was a Captain. He, poor man, had all the characteristics of a poker, except its occasional warmth. He evidently feared that I spent too little time in considering the lillies of the field, and in reflecting on the dangers of purple and fine linen, for he took me aside one day and with a serious and friendly and soapy unction said: “Don’t you think it would be a good thing if you were to attend church a little more frequently than you do?”



MR. A. L. HUMPHREY



Appreciating the kindly interest of an older man, I said, "Yes, Captain, that is quite true." Thereupon he added, "You see it would get you into the nicest society." I thanked him, but can scarcely decide even now whether at the moment I was more shocked than amused at his allusion to society, and church as a passport to it. I felt myself in no need of a "cloak." He little knew what I thought then and have continued to think of "Society," as he called it and understood it and *used it*. Only the pen of a Thackeray could hold the mirror up to its numberless grades of men, not to speak of women chasing, — what? The

"Polished horde"

"Formed of two mighty tribes, the Bores and Bored."

Boredom is the pebble that always will get in the slipper of the pilgrim of pleasure.

It is this class with their incessant twaddle, with their affectations, their superficial education, their inordinate fear of not being in the fashion, their terrific deference to opinion—it is this *new* class that have utterly destroyed good manners, and made the mode of the day a pair of pumps shining under a suit of overalls. Where does all this tend? Has there come over us a change from the chase of the almighty dollar to something else? Or is the answer that many of our people have not been able to receive the blessings of unexampled growth in the right spirit? Is exceptional good fortune to be a means of demoralizing us? Let us beware of the frivolity and emptiness of effort that are eating into our present days' civilization. Is there anything yawning society will not do to be amused?

If the Father of his country could return to earth and cast his martial gaze around, one can almost imagine him putting a kindly hand on President Taft's shoulder and saying "Great God, Will, am I the father of this?" They either screech or purr. There is no golden mean. Let them go on, but keep yourself on the side lines; true dignity comes from all absence of effort, all freedom from pretense. That is the perfection of good breeding. The pity of this new society is that all its habits make almost as effectual a disguise mentally and morally as a domino at *Mardi-Gras* does physically. One wonders if there is such a thing as absolute sincerity. Are we all posing or simply posing as posing? Everybody strives to look like everybody else. Individuality is totally lost. Cicero says: "I would rather have sound common sense without eloquence than folly with a fine flow of language."

\* \* \* \*

It was our own grand old dame with her long-descended point-lace; a perfectly composed and balanced study; the tones and values true; her perfectly modelled hands, and her Goya Lily, who remarked: "I never say rude things; but if you wish me to be sincere, I confess I think everybody is a little vulgar now, except old women like me." And there is much more truth than jest in the remark.

\* \* \* \*

Like Artemus Ward I have found that, "one of the principal features of my entertainment is that it contains so many things that don't have anything to

do with it." To be able to entertain one's self is a qualification every man should possess. Blessed is he who has resources of contentment. You will do well to remember the words of Edward Dyer, a sixteenth century poet:

My mind to me a Kingdom is;  
Such present joys therein I find,  
That it excels all other bliss,  
That earth affords or grows by kind.

We all need retreat from time to time, to get away to some quiet nook far from the troubles of today or the cares of tomorrow. So many people lose themselves through never being by themselves. It is useless, says Epictetus, to desire to kill tigers and lions in distant lands if we cannot rid ourselves of the wild beasts in ourselves. We need to stop and consider and think it all over in silence. To take stock as it were, "Know thyself." Leisure for meditation is no small treasure, though the social world does not number it amongst its joys. As my old friend Howard Saxby expresses it:

Just get together with yourself  
And trust yourself with you.  
And you will find how well yourself  
Will like you if you do.

Our tendency is toward too much activity and too little thinking. Calm consideration and quiet study seem to be entirely lost in our hustle and bustle fever-heat of action. It is an empty life that needs only to be amused. You must take in before you can give out. Hived bees get sugar because they give back honey. All existence is a series of equivalents.

You might look up Proverbs, Chapter 25, Verse 17, and fix it in your mind. Regard it through life as a green signal.

Apply it particularly to calling on people—especially busy people—and all people really worth knowing are busy people. The thing to do is to come to the point immediately after the greeting. Old friendships, it is true, are like a shaft of light across the gloom to a busy man, but let the busy man himself indicate an excursion into old scenes, old friends and old memories. And then it is a safe rule to utterly discredit any insistence on his part upon your staying, even if several times repeated. This may seem cold philosophy, but it is nothing of the kind. It is simply taking a fact at its real value and injecting it into conduct. Above all never quote one man to another in a business or professional interview without specific permission, and then be scrupulously accurate.

Keep out of the lime light. Listen a great deal. Talk very little.\* It was Sydney Smith who said of Macaulay, "He has occasional flashes of silence that make his conversation perfectly delightful." No great talker ever did anything great yet, in this world. Most people talk too much. They are like the grass-hoppers, which, as Burke observed long ago, made far more noise and were much more audible than "the stately cattle that are grazing in silence." You have heard of the small pompous individual of whom some one said he had not body enough to cover his mind decently with; his intellect was improperly exposed.

\*Proverbs XVII, Verse 27.

Remember the first lesson of breeding is to decently and discreetly *apprenez à vous effacer*. Keep your claws sheathed. You can do more with molasses than vinegar. The puff perfect is the puff personal — adroitly masked. Incidentally, it may be observed, that it is just as necessary to cultivate our cabbages as it is to watch our roses.

Don't forget the fable of the little dog that barked at a cyclone and got blown inside out. The moral is, face the wind but keep your mouth shut. There is the man who says he is able to tell any woman's age by looking at her. Maybe he can, but if he has any sense he won't attempt it. It is worse than kissing the wrong girl.

There are lots of things it doesn't pay to say or do. I have a friend than whom there is no better meaning man on earth, but somehow or other he has utterly failed to comprehend the thought I am now trying to convey to you. He has not cultivated obscurity as a virtue. Let us suppose Julius Caesar, George Washington and General Grant sitting in the Duquesne Club swapping reminiscences over a cigar and a high-ball. If my friend joined the party, at the very first opening in the conversation he would immediately recount some experience of his own which would make them look like bush-leaguers. Be a good listener. When you have nothing to say don't say it.

\* \* \* \*

Of course there is another side to all of this as there is to everything, for it has been said that modesty is a drawback to success—that a failure to perceive his own limitations has been the one real mainspring

in many a man's success in life — in fact the only one. This may be true. "Jackdaws may strut in peacocks' feathers"— for a time, but not all the time.

The most striking thing about a really educated man is not the extent of his knowledge but the extent of his admitted ignorance. The wiser a person is the greater the number of things he doesn't know. No man is so consummate an ass as the one who thinks he knows it all, or who even thinks he knows a great deal.

\* \* \* \*

But I must not lose sight of the Secretary and Treasurer in my ramblings. His kindly intended suggestion was dangerously close to snobbery. What is a snob? As I have understood the word it is a man who abases himself in the presence of people whom he considers his superiors. Byron said of Moore, "Tommy dearly loves a Lord." A snob is one who worships wealth or social position. A snob is a man on a ladder who kisses the feet of the man on the round above him and kicks at the man on the round below him. I suppose in a way every man more or less makes foothold of others and this is the peculiar province of the snob, and too often the effort is rather clumsily disguised. Many illustrations of this will occur to your mind *more especially one or two outstanding cases*, but that is our secret.

I have met many snobs and many Uriah Heeps. There is quite as much snobbery among people who proclaim their humble beginning as a means of emphasizing their present greatness. Dickens recognized this when he created the character of Mr. Bounderby. If Dickens had not written *David Copperfield* prior

to his first visit to the United States I could have made a good guess as to where he discovered the original Uriah Heep. I could put my finger on him — a perfect model. *This is another of our secrets.*

\* \* \* \*

When you came home at the close of your first term at Harvard University, you and I one morning started to walk down Shady Avenue. Before we had gone far you spied our old Italian friend of the "White Wings," and without a word you darted across the street and spoke to him. Only a gentleman could have spontaneously performed such a gracious act and I felt very proud of you. Does anyone suppose a snob would have even thought of walking across the street to say a kind word to a street sweeper? That illustrates and puts into a nut shell what I am trying to say.

Your action on that occasion reminded me of an old story told of Browning. He happened to be doing the honors at the house of his son, the artist, during the latter's absence. An unannounced visitor joined the fashionable throng. Mr. Browning essayed to shake her hand, when she interposed with the explanation that she was only the cook who had been asked in to look at the pictures. "And I am very glad to see you," said Mr. Browning, "take my arm and I will show you around." It is possible that no one has ever been able to understand all of his poetry, but of his manhood there can be no question.

\* \* \* \*

Curiously enough there is quite a distinction between the English and the American use of the word

## LETTERS TO MY SON

snob. In an American university town snob would not be applied by gownsmen to townsmen, but by townsmen to gownsmen. In certain circles it may occasionally be applied to the non-elect, but it is much more likely to be applied by "climbers" to inaccessible members of the "inner circle;" a snob is not one who seeks to associate with those of superior rank or wealth or intelligence, but one who keeps aloof from those he thinks of inferior rank or wealth. In England a snob is a man who falls short of the perfect aristocrat through a taint of democratic vulgarity, whereas in the United States a snob is a man who falls short of the perfect democrat through a taint of aristocratic exclusiveness.

\* \* \* \*

There used to be what was called a "Four Hundred" in New York. They created themselves the social elect and every climber was eager to gain admission to their circle.

A person, whose forbears laid the foundations of a colossal fortune by trading in skins, took the responsibility for many years of making up the list of the elect. Naturally enough she had imitators in every community. Brains, birth, intellect, achievement, grace and beauty did not insure anyone a place on the list, and in time the term "Four Hundred" fell into disuse. Possibly they were bored to extinction with each other. Such an aristocracy could not last. Exclusiveness must be founded on something substantial. The really brilliant, cultivated, and thoughtful men and women of wealth had no sympathy for such an aristocracy; their money was not

spent on monkey dinners and turkey trots. Their beneficence went to endow hospitals, to establish institutions of learning and profound research; to develop an artistic taste among the people, and to improve conditions in the tenements and on the farm.

Such men and women of wealth, not numbering four hundred but many thousands, were and still are the patrons of science, religion and art, and of every movement for advancing the public welfare. They are the aristocrats of human achievement, without claiming to live in an exclusive circle and without limitations as to qualified membership. They prefer to be numbered among the millions who lend a helping hand to the lowly, and thus create an aristocracy of good deeds in which the humblest may have his or her place. In these days we hear much speaking about the rich. One is not surprised that the press should indulge in this indiscriminate scolding, but it is quite another thing when our clergymen—who of all people should hold up the light of hope in this sufficiently dark world—engage in preaching from their pulpits the doctrine of class prejudice and pessimism, and freely using such cant phrases as the “idle rich.”

The rich people of my acquaintance are not wasting their time in riotous living, or idly running motors, or unceasingly loafing at country clubs. They are sober and industrious people who, as a rule, are kept exceedingly busy in the very rare and exceptional occupation of minding their own business, at which they are making a much greater success, and incidentally doing more useful service to humanity than the self-righteous men and women who are engaged in

telling them what they ought to do. One of the fine arts, too often neglected, is that of minding one's own business.

My own conclusion is that the "idle rich" is largely a figment of the popular imagination, and that it exists principally for the use of sensational preachers, ill-balanced socialists, snobs, and jaundiced editors. It is always the leading class of a community which comes in for the most attention, pleasant and unpleasant. Surely we cannot declaim against thrift, and penalize success.

There are some pretty worthless rich people, sad to say, but they are a small minority. My own opinion is that the worst people hereabouts are not those who have money, but those who have not and are ready to do anything to get it. We have been taught that "Money is the root of all evil."\* That old line long ago written in copy books might at least be correctly quoted: "*The want* of money is the root of all evil." It was Benjamin Franklin who said it was hard for an empty sack to stand upright.

One of the most dangerous diseases society must cope with is money-hunger, and to that at least the rich are apt to be immune. Rich men's sons vary very much as poor men's sons do. It all depends on their rearing and on the fellow himself. If a fellow wants to be a dude or a drone in this life of ours, his father's bank-account or the lack of it will not make much difference. Take Clarence Peacock, for example. All the wealth of his father and his father-in-law combined does not prevent him from being the splendid,

\* Timothy, VI 10.

hard working young fellow he is, and he would be just the same if they were poor. Remember that Marcus Aurelius says, "Even in a palace life may be well lived."

It is an infinitely more meritorious thing for a rich man to lead a safe moral life than for a poor one. The poor man has the better of that proposition because he is subjected to less temptation.

\* \* \* \*

Dr. George Trumbull Ladd, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy in Yale University, has well said that, "The Great Illusion" in our own land and day is the general belief that to get money and so to control the things which money will buy is the only way to get happiness, and he goes on to say that the curious thing about it all is that rich men themselves will tell you that riches have not brought to them the happiness they expected from them; often, that they were not at all so happy as they were when they were poor, yet they, too, and the multitudes of the people go steadily or fitfully and feverishly on, just as though they were firmly convinced that the experience of the race did not tell the truth; or that they could somehow make themselves exceptions to the universal law. And he adds: "There must be something in human nature, and in its environment, to account for such self-contradictions and irrational behavior as this attitude of the multitude of men toward great wealth seems to indicate."

\* \* \* \*

If exact definitions could be given of what constitutes "poverty" and what constitutes "inordinate

## LETTERS TO MY SON

wealth," the issue would be an excellent one for discussion in academic circles. The practical mind, however, will note that the number of persons exposed to the temptations of poverty must be at least ten thousand times as great as the number exposed to those of inordinate wealth. Consequently it is the poverty vices and crimes that most concern not only the police but the reformer. Profligacies of the inordinately wealthy pass over a community almost as harmlessly as a flaming comet that astounds but is too far out of reach to affect the lives of many. The temptations of poverty, however, festering in obscurity, may poison the air for thousands.

\* \* \* \*

Why cannot men appreciate the beauty and gentleness of living in and of itself, the wealth of joy in reflection, of comfort in a mind trained to see the better things and to dwell amid the compensating thoughts? Why should not everyone determine to live worthily upon the earth even though their names never become known for any superior talent or activity, to be honest and industrious, even though not endowed with wealth and preferment?

\* \* \* \*

There is much in that French saying, "If youth had the knowledge, if age had the force." Of course it would be agreeable to combine the best of every period of life and hang on to the combination but, as Matthew Arnold has so truthfully pointed out, the only thing youth and age have in common is discontent. The profitable course is to make the most of the age, the place, the job we happen to be in,





MR. GEORGE WESTINGHOUSE

and while philosophizing enough, not to spend too much energy in baying at the irrevocable. Aim at health and happiness and help your brother man. He who walks softly through life, doing a kindness where he can and so keeping faith in mankind, need not be anxious about what may be written on his tomb.

\* \* \* \*

The greatest thing demanded by this age is to rear men and in the natural course of human life, in college and after, certain of them will gradually separate themselves from the great mass and rise above it. These are the big men and they will be the rich men and they ought to be. We need them more and more and we will continue to need them, and there will always be room for them at the top, for we never can again break big business into little firms, or disintegrate our great railroad systems into their original component and unrelated parts. Business forever hereafter must be on the plan of the tides of the sea and the courses of the planets.

Our demands, our enterprises, our commercial movements must be gigantic and the men who put their lives and their brains into them, like Mr. Westinghouse, Mr. Hill or Mr. Carnegie will have a right to share the profit in proportion to their ability, adventure and investment, and the smaller men who may seek to obscure their own failures by snarling and barking about "predatory wealth," will only expose themselves to ridicule and contempt, for you can take it as a fundamental truth that the American people will not be fooled all the time by bossism or socialism or any other *ism*.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Let us rather believe in the greatest men for the greatest things, the greatest opportunities for all men, the greatest liberty for the greatest achievement of any and every useful enterprise with no obstructive laws.

There is no greater nonsense than that the possession of wealth by one person means poverty for the many. The contrary is the rule. Wealth provides the employment that helps the whole population and does not detract from the general prosperity.

Both in Washington and in all the States we are legislating too much for little things. The laws of nature and the gifts of God call for legislation that shall approach the magnitude of the things to be done, and to be done by men great enough to do them, and in the future the vast majority of our great men will continue to spring, as they have in the past, from small beginnings. It may seem to you that this is repeating myself and it is, but you cannot get it too firmly fixed in your mind that an Academic degree and a degree in the study of law, necessary and honorable and creditable as both are, do not make a lawyer. They are only a beginning—the alphabet of his training.

\* \* \* \*

You doubtless will find more or less repetition in these pages, but the constant similarity of the subject renders that fault difficult to avoid.

## LETTER II

### QUEEN AND CRESCENT

(Continued)

THE General Passenger Agent was a Major. The Purchasing Agent was a General, and he looked every inch the part. He was a fine old gentleman. The General Superintendent never pretended to have been more than a private.

The Superintendent of Motive Power had served on the Confederate Cruiser *Alabama*, so he claimed, but it happened that an engineman he had fired, no doubt for ample cause, wrote to the President and said the gentleman was a liar, that he never saw the *Alabama*, and that when the American Eagle screamed he betook himself to the more peaceful climate of Cuba, and there ran an engine until he was discharged for *burning her*."

\* \* \* \*

Practically all of the passenger conductors and enginemen had served in either army.

When you consider that condition, and the fact that at this moment I can only recall in my acquaintance, a mere handful of veterans of the Civil War still in active official harness, one does feel that time is marching on. These men are Captain Geo. F. Baer,\* President, *Philadelphia and Reading R. R.*; Mr. L. E. Johnson, President, *Norfolk and Western R. R.*,

\*Obiit 1914.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Colonel J. M. Schoonmaker, Vice-President, *Pittsburgh and Lake Erie R. R.*; Captain G. W. Booth\* (Confederate), Comptroller, and Mr. C. V. Lewis, General Freight Agent of the *Baltimore and Ohio R. R.*; Mr. Edward Colston, General Counsel, *Queen and Crescent* (Confederate), "Uncle Bill" Lewis, of the *Norfolk and Western Road*, and Mr. Charles Watts, General Superintendent of Passenger Transportation, *Pennsylvania Lines West*.

Ten years from now the familiar sight of a soldier of the Civil War will be almost unknown; only a few stragglers will be left. Today (1913) according to the last Pension Bureau statistics, their ages average slightly over seventy-two years.†

The war between the States was the crucible of a great people who tempered their principles with their courage and blood on the points of bayonets and sabres, at the muzzles of guns and cannon, on land and sea. It was the inquisition of republican institutions.

If, as in the olden times in the armies of Saul and David, of Hannibal and Caesar, the fighting forces of the Civil War had been assembled on one broad plain, to come to a decision on one mighty battle, it would have made a continuous battle line of nearly seventeen hundred miles — a soldier to every one and a half yards on the Northern line, and a soldier to every four yards on the Southern battle line.

But time has bridged the chasm of the Civil War which represented a mighty struggle and probably the most momentous victory as yet recorded in human annals.

\*Obit 1914

†Of the two and three-quarter millions of men enlisted in the Northern Army one million one hundred and fifty thousand or 42 per cent. were 18 years old and under.

On the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States sits a grave and learned chief justice who was once a Confederate soldier. With him sits an associate justice who served four years in the Union Army. There sits also on that bench another associate justice who fought for three years under the Stars and Bars.

Lincoln's prayer for "a new birth of freedom" was long ago answered. It is not merely that human slavery was destroyed. It is not merely that the doctrine of secession was crushed. It is not merely that the North brought the South back into the Union and established the supremacy of the national authority. Out of it all a new nation came into being, with new ideals, new aspirations and new principles. The baptism of blood was indeed a consecration.

It is possible, as James Bryce\* has remarked, that a higher statesmanship might have averted the Civil War. But it is not possible that any statesmanship could have produced the nation that emerged from that conflict. It was a nation forged on the anvil of a war that took no thought of material gains or of material losses. Out of the welter came a national life vastly different from anything that went before. It is easy to picture a government that could have disposed of the slavery issue on a basis of dollars and cents. But it is not easy to picture a country that could have grown into the United States that we know without the suffering and sacrifice of the Civil War.

This is a generation that was born after the smoke of battle had cleared away, and it is a generation prone to forget how much blood and iron have gone into

\* See Letter X.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

the winning and holding of human liberty. Let it remember that the broken remnants of the blue and gray had once seen a vision, and that visions count for infinitely more than money in the making of a nation.

It is not an uncommon remark that Gettysburg should have been included in the "Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World," but that book was published ten years before the Civil War.

It matters not, however, whether Creasy was or was not in time to recognize Gettysburg among his "Decisive Battles." It was anything but decisive. Mr. Lincoln was one of the first to discern that Meade's overwhelming victory did not signify the early close of the war. This is what he wrote to General Meade just after Lee's retreat:

"I do not believe you appreciate the magnitude of the misfortune involved in Lee's escape. He was within your easy grasp, and to have closed in upon him would, in connection with our other late successes,\* have ended the war. As it is, the war will be prolonged indefinitely. Your golden opportunity is gone, and I am distressed immeasurably because of it."

The war went on as Lincoln predicted, and with no abatement in its fury, for a period of nearly two years. From May to July alone General Grant lost over fifty thousand men in his advance from the Rapidan to Richmond, and in the same year the National Capital was panic stricken by the approach of the forces of General Early.

Nor is it necessary to recall the furious fighting in the west after Gettysburg, especially at Franklin, and Atlanta and elsewhere. In fact the entire war

\* Fall of Vicksburg, etc.

zone witnessed almost ceaseless bloody battles from the date of Lee's defeat on the first three days of July, 1863, to his surrender at Appomattox in April, 1865.

Lincoln was the great outstanding figure through this terrible period. In the fulness of his fame he joined the company of the immortals, and what a splendid memory his personality suggests, and what a revelation of human power and wisdom his service to the nation!

You have heard a great deal about his "limited education." Yet he had an education to be envied, and the hard labor and privations he was obliged to endure in his youth contributed to it. It is not alone a question of schools, teachers and books, but rather a year by year process of development from the first breath of life until the last. It was in that manner that Lincoln acquired his education. He was a student all his life, and in his later years he had opportunities for learning that probably never were equalled before or since. He saw the greatest experiment of the ages in popular government working out before him under the severest test, and he was literally forced into the study and observance of its every detail. In the same manner he was obliged to study human nature; he had to study everything in its broadest sense, and in addition to all that, there was the inspiration of the natural student within him. What could a mere school have taught Lincoln that would have compared with what he taught the world?

The matchless monosyllables of his short and simple speech at the dedication of the site of the battle of Gettysburg are so fixed in the memory of

## LETTERS TO MY SON

the nation and of the world as to have a historic eminence co-ordinate with that of the battle itself.

That such an utterance should stand for all time, as a source of patriotic inspiration to generation after generation of Americans, is matter for profound gratification. It expresses with a noble simplicity the ideal of the nation; it is filled with a solemn sense of what the preservation of this nation and its ideals means not only to ourselves and to the present time, but to all the world and to future ages.

From the first word to the last this thought, this feeling animates Lincoln's utterances. To have conveyed so lofty a conception of our country's destiny, of its part in the shaping of the destinies of the world, without the faintest trace of national vaingloriousness, is perhaps the most remarkable of all the remarkable qualities of the Gettysburg address.

This address holds a permanent place among the treasures of the English tongue, and among the oratorical masterpieces of all time. Few oral utterances in any language can bear comparison with it for perfection of form or for moving quality, and it is interesting to know that its living words have been carved on the stone mantel in the hall of one of the colleges of Oxford University as an illustration of pure English.

The remaining veterans of the Civil War are passing away very rapidly, still the government pays out in pensions every year more than the Balkan War\* has cost the allies. For what we pay in pensions we could maintain a much greater army than Germany

\*1912

groans under. Our Civil War is costing us, in pensions, more than the wars of the world. It grows bigger rather than less every day.

But the Civil War meant more than battle. When Lee surrendered at Appomattox each person then living in the United States had on his or her shoulders a Federal debt of about eighty dollars. Today each inhabitant's share of interest bearing debt is approximately ten dollars. At the earlier date two-thirds of all Government debt paid six per cent. interest, and now over two-thirds pays only two per cent.

Thus, measured by the yearly debt burden, each American in 1865 carried about twenty-four times as much as he does today.

The wheat which is consumed in a year by each person in the United States is now worth very little more than what it cost every individual to pay his share of interest on the national debt when Andrew Johnson became President.

\* \* \* \*

And at that period war stories were the fashion. Here is a specimen: A veteran had a comrade to dinner at his home, and to the exclusion of everything else they talked their soldier experiences, the little boy of the family listening with wide-eyed interest. After dinner he was ordered to bed, but begged to be allowed to listen a little longer. After a while he was told to say good night and go. He said, "All right, Daddy, I'll go if you'll only tell me one thing. Didn't you and Captain Brown have nobody else at all to help you put down that rebellion?"

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Here is another: An old soldier, who really had a fine military record, but whose imagination got away with him at times, was telling a crowd of an army adventure. "There was a nest of rebs on one side of a river," he said, "and we was on the other. We had to dislodge 'em. There wasn't but one way to do it, and that was to swim the river and get at 'em. So we stripped off our clothes, laid 'em on the bank and jumped into the ragin' torrent. It was a hard swim, but we made it. Just as I was climbin' up the bank on the other side I saw a Johnny Reb jump up out of the brush. Quicker than thought I pulled my revolver out of my hip pocket and covered him and told him to surrender or die."

"Look here, Uncle Bill," said a bystander, "a minute ago you said that you stripped all your clothes off and laid 'em on the bank and swam that stream. What I want to know is, if you hadn't any clothes on when you climbed up that bank, how could you pull that revolver out of your hip pocket?"

Bill eyed him solemnly for a moment and then said: "That may seem like a natural question for a young cub who never saw no war to ask, but I want to tell you that a soldier learned to carry his hip pocket with him, no matter whether he had any clothes on or not." \* \* \* \*

It was Artemus Ward who declared that the Rebellion must be put down even if all of his wife's relatives had to go to the front.

\* \* \* \*

Colonel Schoonmaker tells the following anecdote: A handsome young soldier lay in the last agony upon

a battlefield. To the friend bending over him he murmured, hoarsely:

“Tell Caroline my last thoughts were of her. Say I died with her portrait pressed to my lips.”

He gulped and added:

“Tell Minnie and Grace and Harriet the same thing.”

\* \* \* \*

The Civil War brought into use a vocabulary of its own, which for a long time had quite a vogue. Nothing of this vocabulary survives today in usage. “Shoddy,” “Skedaddle,” “Copperhead” are words that carry no meaning in 1913 save to the historically minded who have come across them in their reading.

“Shoddy” was a highly spiced synonym for “sham.” It had its origin in the great fortunes army contractors made in supplying the Government with garments made of “shoddy” at the price of good cloth. By 1863 this business had been checked, if not stopped, and if the Government was not always getting what it paid for it was not being cheated so badly as it had been in the earlier days of the war. The stories told by veterans of “shoddy” overcoats, and shoes made of queer substance, which, whatever it was, was not leather, were only too true.

To “Skedaddle” meant to run away as fast as your legs could carry you. It was used to describe the degeneration of a retreat into panic flight.

But of all words coined during the war “Copperhead” was the term most galling to persons who were its objectives. The “copperhead” is a poisonous snake,

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which, unlike the rattler gives no notice of its intention to strike. Northern soldiers bestowed the name copperhead on those militant opponents of Lincoln who antagonized him, not simply because he was a Republican, but because he was trying to overcome the rebellion, and it was applied to all peace-at-any-price Democrats.

\* \* \* \*

The phrase “carpet-bagger” came into use in the South during the early reconstruction period following the Civil War. A carpet bag was just a bag made of ordinary carpeting which was used fifty years ago precisely as a leather bag is to-day. Who coined the historical political phrase out of “carpetbag” we cannot tell. Office-seeking northerners going south to help govern that section were called “Carpet-baggers” by the southern people because about all they took south was easily contained in their carpetbags.

NOTE, 1915:

\* \* \* \*

The outbreak of the great war in Europe meant the inevitable cessation of interest in many other things, and this manuscript written in 1912-'13 and '14 was put aside. In reading it over, and particularly the foregoing reference to the Civil War, I am reminded of the answer the southern negro made when asked if the European war had affected the people of the South:

“Yes, sah. Powerfully, sah! Dere’s Cunnel Sharp, foh example, sah, him dat used to tell about de time in de rebellion when he smit a thousand Yankees in one day. Dat was some rem’niscence sah; but since

QUEEN AND CRESCENT

dis wah stahted he dun mixed sech a lot of Turcos  
an' Belgians an' Cossacks in dat story dat yo' can  
hardly unfathom it. Ah tells yo' de wah in Europe  
hab suttlenly 'dulterated *our* wah stories, sah."

Possibly in this sense some of my comments have  
been rendered out of date by this war.

## LETTER III

### QUEEN AND CRESCENT

(Continued)

BUT I have wandered away from the *Queen and Crescent R. R.* \* \* \* \*

The Superintendent of Motive Power was a Kentucky Irishman and a very devout Roman Catholic. Yes, he was, the merry old soul! One day after a good square meal (and he loved the pleasures of the table) he looked across at me and said, "By the Eternal, Billy, why didn't you remind me this was Friday?"

I remembered this. He was very fond of a steak smothered with fresh mushrooms, and next time we were at lunch together on a fast day, I waited till the smoking hot and inviting dish was in front of him, and then said, "Now Uncle Jim, don't jump on me; I want to tell you beforehand this is Friday." He looked at me with his fork still poised in the air, a juicy morsel of steak on the end of it, and said, "You think you're God damn smart, don't you?" But that fork delivered its freight just the same, and forever after at meals on Friday, in the classic language of Elbert Hubbard, the bull was always sent to the stockyards. \* \* \* \*

The General Superintendent, a man of marked ability, was also a modern Vicar of Bray. He wore

a large and many colored masonic charm, so adjusted that it could be slipped inside his waistcoat or displayed outside as the occasion required. He was, barring certain habits, a splendid illustration of the self-made man. He had acquired a good deal of polish and a wonderful fund of general knowledge. He was a native of Kilkenny, Ireland, that home of the two cats of legend, that "scratched and fit and growled and bit." He came here as a poor boy, served four years in the Union Army, and went to work as a brakeman after being mustered out.

He always had a keen eye on his operating cost and promptly laid off crews and track men whenever he could help his payroll. They said of him that he went to the funeral of an old yardmaster, and when the six pallbearers came out carrying the coffin he raised his hand and absent-mindedly said: "Hold on, boys! you can get along without two of them."

\* \* \* \*

He was one of the most picturesque swearologists\* ever heard in action. When peeved he by no means confined himself to "tut, tut"; he swore with the greatest ease and pungency. Of course, the proper function of bad language is to sustain and comfort mankind in the minor ills of life. In the presence of anything like a great crisis it is superfluous and inadequate, although everybody loves Farragut for "damning the torpedoes." And it makes one's blood tingle whenever one calls to mind that wholly unprintable monosyllable with which the French Captain at Waterloo replied to the English officer who called upon him to surrender.

\*Even the late John C. Gault, and Mr. F. D. Underwood not excepted.

Cursing and swearing, however, need be put neither among the sins nor among the virtues. They may be an elaboration, even a vice of language; they are scarcely a vice of the heart. Uncle Toby, immortalized in *Tristram Shandy*, remarks: "We curse nowadays, it seems, not in order to call down magic punishment on our enemies but to exercise our color-sense in words." Swearing of this kind is in the nature of a gesture rather than of an oath. We think of Ajax defying the lightning, of Friar Tuck with his mingled monk's patter and profanity. It is an attempt to elevate prose above dullness, to keep language from falling asleep.

\* \* \* \*

When it came to dallying with the truth, it would have been folly to back Munchausen, or even Ananias of odious memory, against him in a competition. Undoubtedly he sprang from the regions of the joyful lie. Probably not since the Father of Lies first opened his shop and began business—not since these majestic liars of history has there been a man to rise to such heights of splendid mendacity. He could meekly put forward a triumph of a lie; a master lie; a lie, my lords, that puts truth, the blundering dolt, to shame. Never a crude lie, but a smooth, gentle, insinuating statement, that would spread until it permeated the whole, and imparted to it its own shade and color. He attained an eminence in the art which can never be taken from him—his glory can never fade.

\* \* \* \*

In all my experience he was only even approached by a certain Division Superintendent on the *Baltimore*

*and Ohio Railroad* in later years. This deeply religious person, however, was simply an amateur in comparison. His lies could not always be classified among the harmless economies of the truth upon which the very existence of our daily life seems to be so largely based. They were glaring prevarications. He did not hesitate to put the most barefaced lies in writing, which was a trifle clumsy, to say the least. So awkward was he that on one occasion a grievance committee of trainmen called on me and presented a complaint that *they could not believe a word he said!* This man loved and believed his Bible, but he could have little realized the punishment of Ananias.

Some one has asked whether the habit of indulging in lying is hereditary. In some instances, perhaps, but I have heard men whose ability could only have been acquired throughout a number of years of long assiduous practice and careful attention to detail. I suppose anybody who keeps at it as persistently as this superintendent did could become a pretty good liar in time. Rome was not built in a day.

\* \* \* \*

The oversized imagination of youth is something quite different and it is frequently delightful. It must be mildly checked, however, lest it develop into decided prevarication. Mrs. Brown, whose memory was a little rusty, solemnly called her young daughter and said:

"Margaret, do you remember what happened to those children in the Bible who told stories — how the big bears came out of the woods and ate them all up?"

## LETTERS TO MY SON

“Oh yes, Mamma,” said Margaret, with goose-flesh shivers, “I remember, wasn’t it dreadful! And I’m not going to tell another story as long as I live, because, mamma, would you believe it — only yesterday when I was playing in the back yard a great, big, black bear came out from under the currant bushes in the garden and bit me right on the knee.”

\* \* \* \*

There is also the kindly—shall we say the justifiable lie. You will recall how Dickens described that when Martin Chuzzlewit was cast out by Pecksniff in a pouring rain he was handed a little book by Tom Pinch, and that when a little later Martin opened the book to whet his rage generally for mankind, he found a little piece of money, not much, but Tom’s all, wrapped in a piece of paper wherein it was written that he should not know what to do with it if he had it, and begging Martin to accept it.

“There are some falsehoods, Tom,” says Dickens, “on which men mount as on bright wings toward heaven. There are some truths, cold, bitter, taunting truths wherein your worldly scholars are very apt and punctual, which bind men down with leaden chains. Who would not have to fan him in his dying hour the lightest feather of a falsehood such as thine than all the quills that have been plucked from the sharp porcupine reproachful truth, since the world began.”

\* \* \* \*

Somebody told a story in the Maryland Club about three or four young naval officers who were dining together at a restaurant. The conversation became

a discussion on lies and lying generally, and finally there was a warm debate as to who was the biggest liar known to them. An old gentleman sitting at a table near was unable to avoid overhearing the discussion, and after a few minutes he arose and came over to their table.

"I have just heard you decide, gentlemen," he said gravely, "that Captain Arthur Blank is the biggest liar you have ever met. I am his father."

After a few seconds' embarrassed silence, one of the young officers began to stammer apologies, but the old gentleman waived them aside.

"No, no," he said, "don't apologize. It's quite unnecessary. I was only going to say that if you regard my son Arthur as the biggest liar you have met, you cannot possibly have met my other son, Richard."

Richard must have been a star, but for "real classy" work I wouldn't have risked a nickel on him as against my old friend. The latter ought to have been in the Traffic Department; he would have made a record attending rate meetings. The supremacy of even the *Big Four* in that line would have been rudely shaken.

\* \* \* \*

Speaking of the Maryland Club, I happened to be sitting there one evening enjoying with my friend the late Colonel Lewis N. Hopkins (a nephew of the founder of that great Baltimore institution which bears the name of Hopkins) a mild decoction of whiskey and water. At a near but not immediately adjoining table the party included a certain person who was speaking and laughing in so loud a voice

## LETTERS TO MY SON

that he could be heard all over the room. Once or twice the Colonel looked in the direction of that table, but said nothing. Just as we were raising our glasses and smiling at each other the loud voice rang out again. Suddenly Colonel Hopkins lowered his glass and looking me sternly in the eye, said, "William, how do you suppose a creature like that was ever elected to membership in this Club?"

It is only fair to the Club to say that the "creature" was a guest, not a member.

He mentioned no names and neither do I.

\* \* \* \*

The General Superintendent had a favorite story and he enjoyed telling it. I suppose it must have appealed to his Irish sense of humor. He made a trip to Florida and going over the old *Savannah, Florida and Western Railroad*, when the conductor came back to his car to check the transportation, the G. S. with true railroad instinct said, "Captain, let me see your time card." Among the special notes in large type he found this:

"Number One will not run on Sundays, but if Number One should run, *other trains must keep out of her way.*"\* \* \* \*

That was his champion joke and he had scores of them.

Here is another. An Irish section boss asked the Station Agent, "How is Number One?"

"Thirty minutes late."

Thereupon Mike started for the next station. But Number One had made up most of the time and

\*The italics are mine.

found Mike and his hand-car on a high fill between stations. He and his men rolled off and saved themselves. When the train got stopped Mike went up to the engineman and shaking his fist indignantly, said, "Phwat in the hell were ye doin' on *my time?*"

\* \* \* \*

In the General Superintendent's outside office, there was a boy, Irish, of course, who was a prototype of Samuel Lover's *Handy Andy*. A gentleman called at the office and asked if the General Superintendent was in.

"Yes sir," answered the boy.

"Well, I would like to see him," said the caller.

"Do you wish to see him personally, or on business?"

"I wish to see him *personally*."

"Then, what is it you want?"

\* \* \* \*

That boy was like Pat Dillon. During the old Carnegie Steel days Mr. P. R. Dillon\* had been Purchasing Agent, but retired before the consolidation. During the construction of the Farmers' National Bank building in Pittsburgh he was employed to supervise the work on behalf of the owners. A new engineer for the contractors came on the job, and finding this old fellow prowling about challenged him, "Who are you and what do you want around this work?" "Who am I?" said Pat, "I'll show you who I am around here. *I'm the whole thing.*"

Dillon is a character. He was walking along the platform at Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, and the porter from a private car hailed him and said,

\*Obiit 1916.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

“Mr. Schwab wants to see you.” Schwab was then President of the United States Steel Corporation. Pat got aboard and proceeded to regale Charley, as he called him, with the Pittsburgh news. During a lull in the conversation he said, “Do you know, Charley, some of them byes that went over to New York are trotting a pretty fasht clip? There’s Blank and Blank and Blank, they’re gambling and sporting and kicking up all sorts of didoes.”

“Tush, tush, it’s quite out of place to speak before me like that;” said Schwab, “it’s outrageous. Why, the first thing you know people will be speaking like that about me.”

“Oh, begorra, don’t you fool yourself, Charley,” said Dillon, “we all *know* it about you.”

\* \* \* \*

There was one division superintendent on the *Queen and Crescent*, who was quite representative of his class at that period. He and I were in the chart room working on a new time card. The door opened about a foot wide, and there appeared in the space the face of a freight conductor who had been laid off a week or ten days before, but no action taken in the case. The superintendent glared at the man, adjusted a large chew of fine cut in his mouth and said, “Who in the blank damnation sent for you?” and calmly resumed driving pins on the board.

The man was not even given a chance to speak; and people wonder why labor unions with their grievance committees were forced into existence.

I am strongly tempted to speak of the change in the standard of the railroad division official of today

as compared with his predecessor of the late seventies and early eighties, but that has no place here, and then it would of necessity involve a discussion of the railroad employe of then and now and there would be no end to it. Anyhow I shall refer to that general subject later on.

\* \* \* \*

The Comptroller of the road was a Scotsman and he was a gentleman in all that the word in its best sense means, by training, by accomplishment, by his daily walk and conversation. He had an unusual command of figures and statistics and was the only man I have known who could add three columns of figures at once and give the total as quickly as an ordinary person could add one column.

\* \* \* \*

The chief engineer was a French Creole, and a graduate of L'Ecole Polytechnique.

The general superintendent was a good deal of a wag and one evening was holding forth to this gentleman on the ridiculous character of French duels, then very common. "Why," said he, "two Frenchmen get out on the 'Chumps Eliza,' at sunrise, with a bunch of bottle-holders and referees and a few doctors, and then the candidates go at each other with darning needles, and as soon as one fellow is touched 'honor is satisfied,' and the crowd loses a night's sleep for nothing. If they want to fight why don't they meet like Allen and Goss,\* with bare knuckles, or better still with double barrelled shotguns at two paces, and get some action?"

\* This reference was to a prize fight some years before.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

"Ah, mon Dieu," said the chief engineer, "what a country! Are all Americans barbarians like you?"

This gentleman raised his voice against the change of gauge on the railroads south of the Ohio River in 1883.

\* \* \* \*

The railroad had a bad wreck on a high fill near Mason, Ky. The northbound night express was derailed, the rear sleeper became detached, rolled down the embankment, caught fire, and was completely destroyed, happily not before all the passengers had escaped. The railway company stood ready to pay for the sleeper—the "Pennsylvania"—subject to the usual deduction as provided by Master Car Builders' rules, but the Pullman Company presented a bill for the full first cost of the car.

A long correspondence followed with no result and finally a conference was arranged, the railway company being represented by its president, and the car company by Mr. George F. Brown. There was also present Mr. Edgar Johnson of the law firm of \*Hoadley, †Harmon, Johnson and Colston, counsel for the Road.

Brown, who had a very bad stutter, held on to his manifestly untenable position, and Johnson, a most profane person, stormed and swore and gave Brown little chance to speak. Finally he got a word in, and said, "You must g-g-go s-s-slow; you m-must listen to reason, m-mmy k-k-kind Christian friend."

"Oh, kind Christian friend be damned," scornfully answered Johnson; "I'm a Jew."

\* Afterwards Governor of Ohio.

† Afterwards Attorney-General of the United States, and twice Governor of Ohio.

As the royal game of golf was not in vogue\* then, this profanity was, of course, quite inexcusable.

\* \* \* \*

Johnson was an able lawyer and a very witty and generous man. He had made out a bill for a client charging one thousand dollars for certain services the firm had rendered. He showed it to Hoadley who shook his head, took up a pen and added another cipher making the bill ten thousand, and mailed it. A check for that amount was promptly received and when Johnson saw it, he turned to his partner and said, "Hoadley, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Somebody twitted Johnson about a rascally Jew in Cincinnati, saying that was a nice specimen of the race. Johnson said, "Yes he was, but they had made a mistake in his case; *they cut him too low*. When he was cut they ought to have cut his throat."

In those days the Ohio Legislature was alleged to be more or less corrupt, and reference was made to members repeatedly succeeding themselves. Somebody said to Johnson, "Don't you think it would be a good thing if our legislators were limited to one term?"

"That would depend," he said, "on where the term was to be served." \* \* \* \*

Another Johnson story is of the successful political candidate who in returning thanks to his constituents said:

"Gentlemen, I thank you for your support, and I thank especially *the twenty-three gentlemen who formed my majority.*"

\*Golf made its appearance in this country about 1887.

## LETTER IV

### QUEEN AND CRESCENT

(Continued)

AS a matter of fact our Hebrew fellow-citizens understand us much better than we understand them. They see us with X-Rays. They think us easy. So Joe Moses told me. He says they wonder where "these *Shaggits* get all the money we take from them." There is a copy of the Talmud in the library. Dig it out and read it.

\* \* \* \*

About one-fifth of the Jews of the world are to be found in the United States, and about half of that number reside in New York City. In the directory of New York City the commonest name, of course, is Smith. But what do you think runs it a close second? Cohen. And Levy is not far behind. They own New York. Why not? They know a good thing. According to statistics they are a most orderly part of the populace in every country in the world where they are found and where are they not found? It is said that few of the race are to be found in our penitentiaries. Possibly they are too smart to be caught, but one thing is certain, not many of them are recipients of Gentile charity. It is also certain that there is not a profession, not an occupation that is

closed to them; and it must be recognized that they are eminent in all.

\* \* \* \*

Caste prejudice or race feeling or whatever that not easily defined emotion may be, is strangely ingrained in American men, much more so than in Englishmen; and right or wrong, the impression does cling among us that the expression "Jewish gentleman" is almost a contradiction in term. Of course being a gentleman is like being a Jew — you cannot *be* one unless you *are* one; you cannot hope to become one. You cannot make a puddle duck into a canvas back by calling it one.

Take our higher grade schools, like Groton, St. Mark's or St. Paul's, the American equivalents of Eton, Charterhouse, Winchester or Rugby, and how many Jewish boys do we find in them? I suppose you would find ten Jews in Eton for every one in Groton, and the same relative proportion would probably hold in the British and United States armies.

With the exception of Cincinnati, we do not find Jews in what is called society in our larger cities. We do not meet them in New York or Philadelphia or Baltimore or Boston circles. The same is true of Clubdom. Be it understood I simply note this fact as an observation. It is different in London. In England there is no such discrimination on the part of society against Jews, such as persists almost everywhere on the continent of Europe (France excepted), and among ourselves. As a matter of fact English people, in spite of what we call their conventions are really far more democratic than we are, or it

might, perhaps, be more accurate to say that they are much less snobbish than we are. It is true that there may be a mild eccentricity in the Englishman's mental processes, and one of its most curious manifestations is a tendency to self-depreciation. Lord Haldane says his countrymen lack "mind." Just what the learned and noble lord means I cannot say, but no matter what his remark does mean I do not agree with it. It sounds to me cant, pure and simple. Englishmen, it must be admitted, are continually finding fault with themselves and with each other, just as Irishmen love a *shindy* and Scotchmen *metapheesics*. Such *bear garden* scenes as are so frequently enacted in the House of Commons would make an unsophisticated Congressman think he was at a meeting of the Gridiron Club.

It is an ancient habit of Englishmen to set a low value on themselves and it might in some cases be called, and perhaps not unjustly, self-deception. I can remember as a boy hearing old fellows saying that the service and the country were going to the bow-wows as if it were certainly going to happen the next day, but they have not gone yet. Self criticism makes for strength in a people, but it must not be over done. You can always depend that an Englishman will take for granted anything he does well and say nothing about it, while he will shriek from the housetops about blunders and shortcomings. The Englishman is decent and dauntless, full of assurance and strength, and whatever his mistakes they are always made good. England owes everything to its daring. There are two prerogatives of which you can never deprive an English-

man—one the passion for depreciating himself, and the other the right to abuse his government.

In England every man with education is recognized and, if he should so desire and can pass muster on the social conventionalities, he may gain admission to good society. The aristocracy of England absorbs all aristocracies and receives every man in every order and every class who defers to the principle of English society, which is to aspire and excel. Thus Mr. Leopold Rothschild is a member of the Jockey Club in Paris and of the Turf Club in London among the smartest and most exclusive clubs in the world but, I suppose, under our practice he wouldn't be eligible for the Maryland Club or the Duquesne Club. This, considered without prejudice, does make us look very foolish, and narrow and provincial, doesn't it? Still I'm damned if I would change our practice.

Suppose we did change it, who would you suggest? There are no better citizens in this community than Mr. Frank or Mr. Klee, and in the presence of the profound scholarship of Dr. Levy I stand in silence. But these men would probably spurn an invitation to membership in institutions to which their fellows would not be generally received. My personal acquaintance is limited but offhand I could name no others although there may be many.

\* \* \* \*

There is only one test for membership in a club\* and it is simple. It is not like a church. It is this: Will the election of the candidate help to maintain, or better still raise the standard of membership even

\*The first club (in the sense we now use the term) was formed in England in 1670 and was called the London Civil Club. Our first club was formed in Philadelphia in 1833 and was called the Wister.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

to the thousandth part of one per cent, or does the candidate simply file his application for the selfish benefit the club will be to him? A fellow must "pull his weight" and a little more, and this is eternally true in all associations of men professional or social. No one should be elected to a club of ordinary pretensions by any board of governors other than on this principle. All clubs succeed occasionally in electing people whom they afterwards discover they would be better without and it is a jug-handle arrangement for the club has little recourse. A member can resign at will.

So many men are concerned about getting into clubs when they had better concern themselves about their fitness for membership. One measure of success in a club is its power to make people want to join it, and this seems to be best preserved by keeping most of them out.

If we were to open the doors of all clubs as freely to the Hebrew brethren as we have *most unfortunately* opened some of them to our own they would become as promiscuous as the Fort Pitt Hotel. We had a membership committee in the Duquesne Club a number of years ago, and during the year of its existence not a single man was elected, not a soul. Departed days! All honor to that committee.\*

Just how these things are arranged and handled in England and France I cannot tell, and it is not easy to say how the proposition should be worked out here or how it will be worked out. This is another of the problems which can wait for the upturn of the

\* This committee consisted of Mr. Frank Moore, Mr. J. L. Dawson Speer, Mr. W. D. Uptegraff and a minority of two others.





DEAR OLD JOE MOSES

plow of time. It is no part of my mission on earth to change the world. I am not a reformer. That calling requires brains. I efface myself and try to note things in a Boswellian, and especially in a chummy way, for not much among men has ever been accomplished at long range.

\* \* \* \*

There is, on the other hand, the intolerance which some Jews manifest in their relations to each other — men who wish to forget their race and conquer a place at the dinner tables of the Gentiles, as the following will illustrate. The story is told of a young Hebrew lawyer whose name, a good many years ago, was presented for membership in a certain club, and you know the lawyer and the club. He was invited to meet some of the governors, and made a favorable impression and it looked like he was going to get through, when he remarked that in the event of his election he would use his best efforts to *prevent the admission of any more of his people*. That settled it, and he was not elected, and neither have any of *his people*. That young lawyer rose to be a distinguished member of the bench and bar of the county and State of which he is a citizen, but the rule which he unconsciously helped to establish has not been departed from.

\* \* \* \*

There is one member of the Hebrew race for whom I shall always hold a warm and deep regard, viz.: my dear old friend Joe Moses of Cincinnati. He wrote me not long ago: "I think your labor regarding my welfare for the past twenty-five years has

not been in vain. I am a good *Yehudah* and a pretty fair *Shaggits.*" \* \* \* \*

I am told that at University College, London, they have included in their summer course a series of lectures on the mysteries of British etiquette for the benefit of foreigners anxious to learn the English language, English habits, conventions, tastes and manners — and *racial distinctions are not thought of*. Without some such guidance no foreign European can hope to master British taboos. Such a convention as that forbidding an Englishman to play golf in shirt sleeves is not familiar to every innocent visitor. Again, the stranger does not see why the tall hat (now rapidly disappearing) and morning coat should be the mode at Lord's for a University cricket match, and yet be altogether out of place for a boat race at Henley.

The existence of such conventions reminds us that the Englishman, for all his freedom, is much like the Chinese Mandarin. He walks fettered in all his comings and goings by customs, to violate which is to court social death, and to find all eyes riveted disapprovingly upon him. No longer are men judged solely by their birth but by their compliance with the odd code established by custom, and which is the more troublesome to strangers because it is graven on no tables of stone, and explained in no learned treatise.

Of course, it would be the greatest mistake to suppose that money alone will open every door in England, and that it is sufficient to have means in order to go where one pleases. This is equally true in these United States in the matter of private respect,

but in the matter of public preferment and dignity wealth is a handicap. In England, on the contrary, a Westinghouse, a Morgan, a Carnegie or a Hill would have found themselves long ago in the House of Lords. In Canada Lord Shaughnessy is a case in point.

\* \* \* \*

Lord Beaconsfield said, "An aristocracy may be created by laws, but it can only be maintained by manners." From the days of Epictetus, Socrates, and Aristotle, down to the times of Lord Bacon, Chesterfield, Burke, Ruskin, and Emerson, we find the most cultivated men and the finest wits of the day, as well as the philosophers of each period, discoursing upon manners, with a high estimate of their importance.

It is manners which divide our *modern* American society into sets—from the prig and the hopeless boor to men and women of grace and charm. One set has no breeding at all, another has a little, another more, another enough; and between that which has none and that which has enough, there are more shades than in the rainbow; they are endless as the orders of nobility in China, but unlike them incapable of definition. Good manners are the same in essence everywhere—at Courts, in fashionable society, in literary circles and in domestic life; they never change, though social observances, customs and points of etiquette vary with the age, and with the people. Good taste, inherent and ingrained, cannot alter. It is indestructible; it is a compass that never errs. Simplicity in character, in manners, in style, in all things; the supreme excellence is simplicity.

Good manners are the fruits of a kind heart\* and careful home nurture; bad manners are the fruits of a coarse nature and unwise training. Manners must not be confounded with the correct observance of social laws which are but arbitrary rules, differing in various ages and countries. These are sometimes absurd when introduced into a land that they were not made for; whereas, good manners, founded as they are on common sense and kindness of heart, are always and everywhere the same. The fashion of “good manners” never changes. I suppose good manners are unselfish, but the most selfish people might well cultivate them, they are so remunerative. Civility, polished manners mean much to a youth in his first position.

\* \* \* \*

I have in mind several men whom I have known who “married money,” and what prejudices people against them is their tendency to talk about their money in a way that is offensive to others. Good manners depend on the tacit understanding of all parties as to their relations to one another. Nothing can be more brutal than for one to claim superiority or imply it, or more rude than for another to dispute the claim. Such things, if they exist, should be taken for granted. There exists among certain people an insane idea that one must impress others in order to maintain a caste or a cult, and nothing is so sure a mark of an *unarrived* person. There is a strange tendency of the modern mind—a predisposition to classify, but it is altogether artificial and absurd and needless because a man *classifies himself* at every

\* This is a remark of your grandfather.

turn; by his conversation; by the newspapers he reads; by his handwriting; by his socks, his neckties. One man spells "consensus" with a "c" in the middle and that marks him; another talks of "modern science" and the "abolition of dogma" and that marks him. Another will ask for whisky and soda at dinner when the butler is serving champagne, and that marks him. I heard a clergyman, on a Christmas morning, above all others the day of Peace and Good Will, speak of the "mummery and idolatry of the Catholic Church" and that marked him.

\* \* \* \*

If you had been successful, or honored in some particular way, you surely would not dwell upon the fact to others who had not participated. Certainly you would not entertain a fellow who "flunked out" of the University or who never had a chance to go there at all with the information that you were of the Class of '13. So many men are apparently oblivious to the fact that it is good form among the most refined and educated people to conceal rather than display achievement or wealth or learning, and that they are more likely to make enemies than friends among those around them by endeavoring to impress other people with a sense of what they have done or expect to do. For example, Mr. Westinghouse remarked to me one evening after dinner at his house that the phonograph was the most marvellous invention of the age. Just think of such modesty, such condescension, such self-abnegation.

\* \* \* \*

We are prone to cherish prejudices against other peoples and to reckon them as inferior to ourselves,

## LETTERS TO MY SON

simply because they are different. This lack of discrimination is one of our outstanding national failings. So many of our people are impressed with the belief that, if a Republic and Democracy afford the perfection of liberty, then a Monarchy and Aristocracy must of necessity suppress it. They have no adequate appreciation of the Englishman's more than republican liberty. Englishmen have, as we say, "run liberty in the ground," and they are paying for it in the shape of class legislation. In this respect they are having a much worse time than we are. Another manifestation of this lack of discrimination is our habit of introducing people in hotels and clubs or on the street who have no earthly interest in one another.

As a general proposition we have not the broad tolerance we ought to have. There exists among us a widespread and easy and ignorant assumption that every man of another creed or race or born under any other flag must be inferior. It is our bounden duty, of course, to preserve our race purity and refuse to amalgamate with people different from ourselves, but their difference of origin, of government, of character and of destiny, does not justify us in assuming that they are *lower* in the scale than we are, or in treating them with any less consideration and respect than we show to other people with whom we come in contact. In our dealings with the outside world racial and religious intolerance should be eliminated. We are woefully deficient in an international habit of thought. It is well to remember that we are not so detached from Europe and South America as we were fifty or even five years ago.

Before we leave the subject of the Jewish race it is well to remind ourselves that it is to them we are indebted for the Bible. They wrote it with the one exception of the Gospel of St. Luke. Yet they were as grasshoppers in the sight of the great empires that were their contemporaries.

Outside of the Bible, the Jew has not written anything particularly wonderful; but he has secured in these wonderful books a unique permanence for his records. The Assyrian and the Babylonian races' records have only been discovered within the last eighty years. For centuries the site of Babylon itself was argued and the existence of Nineveh denied. But these insignificant Jews have succeeded in preserving copious and continuous annals and of placing them on a pinnacle of honor.

This is all the more strange when we remember that Christ, denied by the Jews, is the cause of this Book being the Book of Books for the greatest nations of today. Christ crucified and rejected by the Jews is the cause of its worldwide circulation, and the labor of its translation into five hundred languages has been time and again the copestone of many a scholar's life.

\* \* \* \*

Lockhart, in his life of Sir Walter Scott, one of the few truly great biographies in the English language, relates that in the closing hours of his splendid life, "The Wizard of the North" asked him to read aloud. "From what book?" came the natural question. What a lesson there is in the simple answer, "Need you ask?" whispered the great and good Sir Walter, "There is but one."

## LETTER V

### QUEEN AND CRESCENT

(Continued)

MANY years after the Johnson-Brown incident, when I was General Superintendent of Transportation at Baltimore, Mr. F. D. Underwood,\* then Vice-President of the *Baltimore and Ohio Railroad*, called me up and said he was taking a party of friends from Chicago down the bay in his yacht that afternoon, and asked me to go along.

When I got to the pier at the appointed time and stepped aboard the yacht, the first person Mr. Underwood proceeded to present me to was Mr. George F. Brown. I hadn't seen the man for nearly twenty years and he looked very gray and grizzled, but his stutter had not departed. At the first opportunity I told Mr. Underwood in an aside, about my previous meeting with Brown, and he insisted on my repeating the story and nobody laughed more heartily than Brown himself, and he remembered and fully corroborated every word of it.

\* \* \* \*

John L. Sullivan the prize fighter, when in the height of his fame, was going over the *Alabama Great Southern* division with his troupe of "scrappers," and a number of them, including the redoubtable John, got into the ladies' coach and persisted in smoking

\* Now President, Erie Railroad.

there. The conductor, Martin Ford, remonstrated with them, but was only laughed at and told to go to that region where it is said only asbestos cats can navigate. The brakeman said *he* could put him out, and old Martin told him to go to it. He did. He told Mr. Sullivan politely that it was against the regulations to smoke in that car. He likewise was promptly told to go to the same sulphurous sphere beyond the grave. But the brakeman didn't go. His gun was under John's nose in an instant and *Mr. Sullivan went*. If he hadn't, Mr. Corbett would have been deprived of the opportunity to distinguish himself by making a punching bag of the gentleman from Boston some years later.

This incident shows that Sullivan must have had good sense at times. It also illustrates the elementary truth which we must all learn sooner or later that life is a series of compromises. Hard and fast rules cannot always be drawn. We must all adapt ourselves and our charts to the course and its currents, its rocks and its shoals. Sullivan was like Callahan.

Mr. Callahan had received a tongue lashing from Mr. Hennessy, and his friends were urging on him the wisdom of vindicating his honor with his fists.

"But he's more than my equal," said Callahan dubiously, "Look at the size of 'im."

"Sure an' you don't want folks to be sayin' Terry Callahan's a coward."

"Well, I dunno," said Callahan, "I'd rather that than to have them sayin' day after tomorrow, "How natural Terry's lookin'".

## LETTERS TO MY SON

I saw Sullivan in action when he met Dominic McCaffrey. Unfortunately it was only a six round "go." The affair took place at the Chester Park race track in Cincinnati on a Saturday afternoon in the summer of 1883 before an enormous crowd. Every time Sullivan hit McCaffrey he *missed* him, and every time McCaffrey hit Sullivan he *hit* him, and if the bout had gone to a finish it could only have ended in the hitherto undefeated Bostonian getting a sound drubbing. At the end of the sixth round there was a long palaver among the plug-uglies who were superintending the job with a view to having the case proceed, but the Sullivan party would have none of it, and in the meantime the referee left the ring and *promptly left town*. On the Tuesday following that official rendered his decision from Toledo, or some other port on the unsalted seas, that Sullivan had won.

A long suffering and idiotic public are still willing to be fooled. P. T. Barnum, many years ago, boldly announced that the American people like to be fooled, and he was right.

Not long ago I happened to meet, on Smithfield Street, Sol Coulson, the old Chief of Detectives, and he stopped me and said, "Mr. Gibson, I want to introduce to you an old friend of mine — this is Dominic McCaffrey."

"McCaffrey, McCaffrey," I said, "Surely not the McCaffrey I saw lick Sullivan some twenty-five or thirty years ago?"

"Yes sir, the same," said Sol proudly.

"But he was robbed of the decision," I added, and McCaffrey blushed like a girl.

Before the advent of dining cars through passenger trains had regular stopping places for meals. There was a particularly good eating station at Eutaw, on the *Alabama Great Southern Division*, and one morning some ladies having had breakfast were walking up and down the platform waiting for the conductor to give the signal to get aboard. A mountaineer came along with an old-fashioned gun over his shoulder and swinging a dead gopher in his other hand. One of the ladies, adjusting her pince nez, said, "Excuse me, but what is that animal?"

"Oh, it ain't nothing but a gopher."

"Is it amphibious?"

"Amphibious hell; it would bite you in a minit."

What marvelous change has come over railroad travel. In those days there were no steel cars which have added so much to the safety and comfort of the public, and electric-lit sleeping and dining cars were undreamt of.

\* \* \* \*

The railroad had a dispute with a firm of contractors over the final settlement for some construction work on the *New Orleans and North Eastern Division*, and, as is rather unusual in such cases both sides were quite satisfied that it was the desire of the other to be fair. There was, therefore, no talk of lawsuits, and it was agreed that the question should be arbitrated, each side naming a representative, and the two so chosen, in turn selecting a third. The final choice was United States Senator J. C. S. Blackburn. It is easy to place this date as it happened when the first Cleveland campaign was in full swing (1884).

## LETTERS TO MY SON

The Senator, after voting at home, came to Cincinnati on the evening of election day and we supped together, and afterward made repeated visits to the offices of the "Commercial Gazette" (Mr. Murat Halstead), and the "Enquirer" (Mr. John R. McLean) to hear the latest returns. The present elaborate method of publishing election figures had not then been evolved.

Halstead belonged to that generation of journalistic giants which included men like Charles A. Dana, George W. Childs, Whitelaw Reid\* and Henry Watterson. When Blackburn pushed open the door of Halstead's sanctum on our last visit, the latter looked up, and raising his right hand above his head exclaimed, "Joe, you've got us by the neck this time!"

\* \* \* \*

Senator Blackburn had given me a note of introduction to Senator Beck of Kentucky, in which he most graciously referred to "a young Scotsman who will sufficiently commend himself." That letter was not used, as I happened to meet Mr. Beck before there was an opportunity to present it, and it is now in one of the old scrapbooks.

Senator Blackburn is endowed with an almost unrivalled eloquence and beauty of expression; he is a real orator and it is as natural for him to speak as to breathe. Words flow from his lips like a silvery stream; he has, too, a marvelous memory and a ready wit. In one of his congressional campaigns a voice in the crowd yelled out, "Joe, if we send you to Congress will you bring me a knife from Washington?" "You bet your life" was the answer. Next

\*Ambassador to the Court of St. James, 1905-12.

time Blackburn was back in that part of his district as a candidate for re-election, the same voice interrupted him, "Joe, you never brought me that knife!" "Oh yes, I did," pulling a fine new knife out of his pocket, and holding it up before the crowd, he said, "and here it is!"

By rare good luck it so happened that he had bought a knife for his boy that morning before leaving his home at Versailles.

Vice-President Stevenson relates the following: When Mr. Blackburn was first a candidate for Congress, he attended a public execution—in plain words, "a hanging"—in one of the counties of his district. Being a gentleman of distinction, and a candidate for Congress, he was appropriately invited by the sheriff to occupy a seat with the prisoner and his spiritual adviser upon the gallows. At the near approach of the fatal hour, the sheriff, with watch in hand, "amid a sea of upturned faces,"\* stated to the prisoner that he had yet five minutes to live, and it was his privilege if he so desired, to address the audience. The prisoner meekly replied that he did not wish to speak. Whereupon Mr. Blackburn, stepping promptly to the front of the scaffold, said: "As the gentleman does not wish to speak, if he will kindly yield me his time, I will take this occasion to remark that I am a candidate for Congress, regularly nominated by the Democratic Convention," etc. This incident being told in the presence of the opposing candidate, the latter remarked that he remembered it well, and could vouch for its truth. He then added that when Mr. Blackburn proposed

\* Sir Walter Scott. *Rob Roy*, Chapter XX.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

to speak out the prisoner's time, the latter turned to the sheriff and enquired who that was. To which the officer replied. "Captain Blackburn." At this the prisoner, who had amid all the exciting scenes of his arrest and trial, and even up to that moment, with his open coffin beside him, displayed marvelous fortitude, suddenly exhibiting deep emotion, exclaimed, "*Please hang me first, and let him speak afterward.*"

\* \* \* \*

My letter to Senator Beck (everybody called him Mr. Beck) had not been delivered, because in the meantime I had met him in the hospitable home of his old friend and crony Mr. David Gibson, the Cincinnati banker and distiller. They called each other Jamie and Davie. Mr. Beck was a man of both brain and brawn and spoke with a Scottish accent almost as marked as that of our friend Mr. James Scott, and took the same pride in it.

Mr. Beck was a devoted friend of one William Smith, the Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens in Washington, an old Scotsman who had made quite a collection of early editions of Burns, particularly American editions, and who bore a great reputation as a Burns scholar and a student of Scottish literature in general. I met this Mr. Smith, "Old Smith," as he was called, a number of times when we lived in Baltimore, but never could understand the odd, as it seemed to me, odd friendship which undoubtedly existed between Mr. Beck and him, two men so utterly unequal and unlike. Smith undoubtedly was a famous gardener, and an untiring collector of old volumes. I am little versed in the science of botany,

but if "Old Smith" understood no more of that science than he did of the literature of Scotland in general and the work and message of Burns in particular, he must have had some able assistance in the gardens. The true Scottish gardener,\* as a rule, is the most interesting of Scottish products.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Beck had a fund of stories and most of them related to people in public life. Here is a specimen: Ignatius Donnelly, then in Congress, had written and published a book attempting to prove that certain plays by a person described as the Bard of Avon were written by Lord Bacon, and that Shakespeare was a myth or a fraud. Soon after the book appeared, one of the Kentucky members who was a famous wag met the author. The member said, "I have been reading your book, Donnelly, and I don't believe a word of it."

"What?" said the author, in surprise.

"Oh, that book of yours," said the member, "in which you tried to prove that Shakespeare never wrote 'Richard the Third,' 'Merchant of Venice,' 'Hamlet,' 'Macbeth,' and all those plays."

"My dear Sir," said the author, with great earnestness, "I can prove positively that Shakespeare never wrote those plays."

"He did," replied the member, "he did write them, Donnelly, *I saw him write three or four of them myself.*"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Donnelly, who in spite of his Irish surname was guiltless of any sense of humor, "Impossible, Sir, that you could have seen Shakespeare write those plays; they were written three hundred years ago."

\* Look over Robert Louis Stevenson's "An Old Scottish Gardener."

## LETTERS TO MY SON

"Three hundred years, three hundred years," slowly murmured the member in a sad tone, "Is it possible that it has been so long? *Lord, how time does fly!*"

\* \* \* \*

This story goes just about as far as the Shakespeare controversy has reached or ever will reach, and it is a question whether the reverent tourist who pays his devoirs at Warwick castle and visits Stratford, is not a happier and more satisfied person than the pugnacious controversialists who find it impossible to reconcile the apparently illiterate mind of the man-of-all-work about the Globe theatre, with the extraordinary familiarity with such ramifications as his plays describe, with royal doings, the nomenclature of palaces, the chamberlain-like accuracy in allotting functions to the myriad characters that carry out the cosmic "business" of his innumerably diversified *scenarias*.

The works of Shakespeare show what the man was the healthiest and best balanced man that ever lived. His greatness consisted in his harmonious many mindedness. The glory of Shakespeare is that he was everything and was great in everything. He spoke of all things with myriad-tongued eloquence. There is no passion, no motion which eluded his understanding. You cannot tell which is greater, his wisdom or his wit, his wit or his wisdom.

For the English speaking people Shakespeare is always there, has always been there. He has cost nothing; and men do not set the highest value on that which costs them nothing. In this respect Shakespeare resembles the Bible. Unknown to themselves the English speaking people think his thoughts and speak his language; the knowledge that Shakespeare and

the Bible are always there, ready if they should be needed, has done much to cloud both in a reverential neglect.

A favorite argument against Shakespeare's authorship is his notoriously bad handwriting. This most assuredly proves nothing. Every boy who knows anything about an English public school, or even a grammar school knows that it is considered bad form to write well. It is, indeed, part of English snobbishness to learn to write badly, and that snobbishness obtained in Shakespeare's time as today, and Shakespeare puts the fact on record about himself in "Hamlet."

I once did hold it as our statists do,  
A baseness to write fair, and laboured much  
How to forget that learning.

And so these Shakespeare iconoclasts, like the Priests of Baal, go about crying out and cutting themselves, while the gods hear them not.

\* \* \* \*

The habit, the affectation — I have just called it snobbery, call it what you please of bad writing has given rise to many amusing anecdotes.

Dr. Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury, of blessed memory, was a celebrated cacographist of the pre-typewriting period. When Mrs. Kingsley, the wife of his great contemporary Canon Kingsley, was lying ill her husband received a letter from the Archbishop.

He conned it carefully and slowly and then said:

"Here is a letter from the Archbishop. I am sure it is sympathetic and affectionate, but there are only two words I can make anything of, and I don't think I can have got them quite right, for they seem to be 'beastly' and 'devil'."

LETTERS TO MY SON

We have no class of men who furnish so many striking examples of quaint writing as railroad officers particularly in their signatures. Take John Smith for example: On leaving college John probably writes his name, thus:

*John Smith.*

As an Assistant Engineer he will probably write it thus:

*John Smith*

As a Division Engineer he will probably write it thus:

*John Smith*

As a Superintendent of a Division he will improve it to:

*John Smith*

And as he advances it will continue to evolve as follows:

*John Smith*

Until finally, when he comes to be a President we will see something like

A cursive signature of "John Smith" written twice, once above the other, with a horizontal line underneath each instance.

or

A cursive signature of "President" written twice, once above the other, with a horizontal line underneath each instance.

Thus we see the seven ages of a signature.

\* \* \* \*

Writing letters seems to have become one of the lost arts. Who today can write a letter like Mamma? I know no one else who writes such polished and perfect letters. There is an artistic feeling in her writing for she does nothing imperfectly. Miss Mary Shearer of Baltimore speaking of one of Mamma's letters said that it was the most beautiful she had ever received or even read, and that was saying a great deal, for few people can write like our dear Mary.

\* \* \* \*

It is a pity that letter writing should have fallen into decay, that power of writing to a friend, perfect in its way, full of life and spirit and sometimes learning, and yet with no effort — high kind of talk given off in its ordinary workings.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Someone has spoken of the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are, chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them in a spirit of kindness.

\* \* \* \*

It is true, sad enough to say, that Mamma's writing is more or less like that of her distinguished kinsman Archbishop Tait. It is said that Napoleon wrote badly in order to disguise his bad spelling. You will entertain no doubt whatever regarding the correctness of this statement the moment you tackle one of the great Corsican's letters. In fact you may find the bad writing, if you get stuck on the translation, a very handy excuse for your own worse French.

\* \* \* \*

Men and women are just as good and clever and kind as they ever were; but life is led at higher pressure, and the sense of finish and the desire for it in everything we do is much less than it used to be. But after all, the great thing in a letter is that the person who gets it should be able to read it, for there is an art in reading not less than in writing a letter.

\* \* \* \*

Never answer a letter without re-reading it. The old copybook legend "haste breeds carelessness" is as true now as it was in the days when good penmanship and that training in the little social courtesies of life which have been allowed to fall into such sad disuse in later years, went hand in hand in the training of youth. It is very easy to say that social con-

ditions have altered, as they have altered economically and politically, and if slap-bang and hurly-burly have given its *coup de grace* to the once gentle art of writing letters, is not that all the more reason why, before it is too late, we should rescue the half-dead art of reading them?

It is certain that penmanship is a lost art.

\* \* \* \*

Never be guilty of the carelessness, which amounts to positive incivility now unfortunately much too common in the land, of not promptly replying to letters, or acknowledging any other personal communication. People who ought to know and do know better are frequently guilty of failing to recognize this well established principle, the neglect of which is not easily pardoned.

\* \* \* \*

The late Mr. Tom Potter, in his day, manager of the *Burlington Road*, was a notoriously bad writer, not from affectation however. He probably had not been to school as long as you have.

A farmer from one of the small stations on his line called at his office in Chicago and asked for an order for a certain fast train to land him at his station as he had been urgently called home. Mr. Potter scribbled something on a piece of memorandum paper, signed it and handed it to the farmer. The latter with natural curiosity, looked at it after he left Mr. Potter's office, but could make nothing of it except the signature and the date.

The farmer boarded his train, and when the conductor came along handed out the note saying

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that he had to get off at blank station. The conductor scrutinized it carefully, handed it back, and passed on. Of course the farmer expected him to come back for his ticket but he didn't. Emboldened by his success, and still unable to decipher the note, the *honest* farmer thought he would chance it for a ride back to Chicago and it worked. Thereafter he used it until the end of the year as a time pass.

\* \* \* \*

Another of Mr. Beck's stories related to Henry Clay. It often happened in the earlier days that the House of Representatives would introduce a resolution instructing the Senators from Kentucky to vote for or against some specific bill pending in Congress. On one occasion such a resolution was about to be passed without opposition, when a hitherto silent member from one of the mountain counties, springing to his feet, exclaimed, "Mr. Speaker, Am I to understand that this Legislature is undertaking to *tell* Henry Clay how to vote?" The speaker replied that such was the purpose of the resolution. At which the member from the mountains, throwing up his arms, exclaimed, "*Great God!*" and sank into his seat.

It is needless to say that the resolution was unanimously rejected.

\* \* \* \*

Here is another story of these days: An old gentleman, a friend of Senator Beck, never seemed to be satisfied unless he had several cases pending in Court. When he died his surviving son who seemed to follow in his footsteps continued to keep up his father's record of proceedings in court.

Several attorneys were talking about the old gentleman and his court troubles one day, when one of them told the following about him:

The old gentleman had just won a case in the Justice Court, when the loser, in a very combative frame of mind, exclaimed, "I'll law you to the circuit court."

O. G.: "I'll be thar."

Loser: "And I'll law you to the Supreme Court."

O. G.: "I'll be thar."

Loser: "I'll law you to hell."

O. G.: "*My attorney'll be thar.*"

\* \* \* \*

Among other prominent men of the South, whom, in the earlier days, I have had the honor to meet, might be named Mr. Jefferson Davis, General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Mr. W. C. P. Breckenridge and General Beauregard. Mr. Davis was a tall man with a slight stoop. He had a keen eye and the simple, easy manner of a well-bred gentleman.

A person, of quite a different stamp of course, whose name will never be blotted from the pages of American Civil War history, whom I had an opportunity to see and speak to, was Sergeant Boston Corbet who was in the detachment of the Sixteenth New York Cavalry which finally ran down Wilkes Booth the assassin of President Lincoln. The attacking party called on Booth and his companions to surrender but they refused and the barn in which they had taken refuge was set fire to. Although strict orders had been given to take them alive, Corbet in the excitement of the moment shot Booth the instant he appeared when the

## LETTERS TO MY SON

flames drove the fugitives into view. When questioned by the officer in command of the detachment, Lieut. Baker, as to why he fired the shot, Corbet, who was a religious zealot told his commander: "Providence directed me."

\* \* \* \*

The body of Wilkes Booth was secretly turned over to his family and now moulders in an unmarked but well cared for grave in a Baltimore cemetery.

\* \* \* \*

A distinguished veteran of the Civil War whom I have met many times is Lieutenant-General S. M. B. Young, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Army (retired). The story is told that when he was present at the annual manoeuvres of the German Army in 1904, the Kaiser was particularly gracious and asked if he had ever been in Germany before. Young immediately said: "Yes Sir." Whereupon the Kaiser asked what parts of Germany he had visited. Young answered: "Milwaukee and St. Louis."

## LETTER VI

THOMAS HUGHES

**T**HOMAS HUGHES, the English author, statesman and philanthropist, visited Cincinnati in the early Eighties.

He had a long experience in Parliament and held advanced views with strong socialistic leanings. He identified himself with the great movements in England for liberalizing education, for secularizing the great universities; for the establishment of working-men's colleges, for the extension to the working classes of the principle of co-operation. His idea was to bring to them the best culture of the time as an offset to the Continental revolutionary tendencies of the day.

He was the founder, with Professor F. D. Maurice, of the Christian Socialists, and among his followers and earnest supporters he could count such men as Canon Kingsley, Lord Lytton, and the Marquis de Grey and Ripon. They were of the pick and pride of England. He led them to the recognition and, to some extent success of the movement in his own country. Their thought was "The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

He was the creator of Rugby on the *Cincinnati Southern Road*, a socialistic community in the moun-

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tains of Tennessee, and it was mainly in connection with that enterprise that he visited this country several times. It proved an utter failure, and he lost a great deal of money over it. It was planned in an optimistic spirit worthy of Mark Tapley.

Thomas Hughes was an extremely religious man and had been the friend of Dr. Arnold, of Carlyle, of Thackeray and especially of James Russell Lowell.

It has been said that he acted as literary god-father with the British public for the author of the "Bigelow papers," and his affection for him and their close friendship ended only with Lowell's death.

It was his intimacy with Lowell that turned his attention to what was going on in this country and raised the deep interest which he took in the great problems which the United States had fought out for itself and for the whole world.

But it is as the author of *Tom Brown's School Days* that Thomas Hughes is best known and will continue to be known.

It is not easy to portray the schoolboy in a way that will interest older men or even other boys, but it has been done by Hughes in *Tom Brown* and by Dickens in *Nicholas Nickleby*. In both cases interest is concentrated upon the master — in the first a demigod, in the second a demon. His own brother George was in the main the original of *Tom Brown*.

He showed the keenest interest in our Government and institutions, and it was a sympathetic interest. Nothing seemed to escape his observation and he looked at things from unexpected angles, and referred to subjects out of the beaten path.

For example, the expression “white trash” as applied (and quite erroneously applied) to the mountaineers of Kentucky, seemed to hold great interest for him. Who were these people? Certainly they were not pioneers. Living in comparative proximity to old sections of civilized social life, here was a semi-barbarous population of our own race and color upon which time and progress had made practically no impression, and of which their very nearest neighbors knew next to nothing and cared less.

“Who,” Mr. Hughes asked, “are these people, thus hopelessly side-tracked in this great land of material progress and opportunity?” They are nearly all of English name and origin. Some sociologists say that they are the descendants of the indentured servants shipped out in far-away days to the planters. There is nothing to support this theory, and the good old English, Irish, Welsh and Scottish names found among them would dispose of it, although that of itself need not always be taken as conclusive proof, for many people of gentle birth were “indentured.” It is more reasonable to suppose their origin to have been mainly fortuitous, recruited during the years from people whom accident, indolence or misfortune drove that way. Whoever they were, or who propagated this ill-starred race, it might truthfully be written in letters of fire over these mountains so fair and glorious to look at, “Abandon hope all ye who enter here.” Sociologically it would seem that the mountains of Kentucky had formed a pocket into which a section of the immigrants of two centuries ago had fallen, and where, knowing little of the world

## LETTERS TO MY SON

on either side of them, they had preserved their peculiarities of speech, custom, and their extraordinary moral code intact until the present day.

They are not outcasts of an old slave-holding civilization, for they existed in their present condition long before the Civil War. Illiterate and despised, they remain unnoticed, save occasionally by the county sheriff, or, more seldom still, by some local politician with an eye on their votes.

\* \* \* \*

The first gleam of hope for these people of the Cumberlands has but recently appeared, and the Moses who was first to show them the light is, happily, one of themselves. He is a real hero in humble life.

One, Mr. J. A. Burns of Oneida County, Kentucky, has arisen as the leader in the emancipation of his people. He is known as "Burns of the Mountains," and by his own efforts he succeeded in starting a school, and he began alone the work on its foundation and did not have a dollar when he started it. He relates that:

"It was dawn of day when I finished the laying of the first stone in the first foundation of Oneida Insititute. I set it as firmly as I could in the wish that it might stand long; and then all alone on the hillside, I stretched out my arms and offered up as good a prayer as I knew how. About then a young feudist came riding over the hill beyond, perhaps from some raid in which he had engaged the night before. It was sun-up and he saluted the rising day with a volley of pistol shots; still, I presume, full of the fury of the combat.

"I accepted that volley of shots as a challenge to my prayer. Three years later I baptized that young feudist, and he rides on feuds no more. My first rude building stands there on the hill, and beside it are now several others larger and better. Did God answer that prayer?"

It is difficult for us to think of a Baptist minister over fifty years of age, a preacher for more than thirty years, who could not read or write, but who learned to do both after the age most men are done with business affairs.

Or of a woman eighty-six years of age going to school to learn to read and write. She learned to do both in the same night school with the Baptist minister in Rowan County, Kentucky.

Nor is it easy to picture to yourself a class in that night school made up of grown men and women, adult Americans, all of them fine-looking people, and everyone of them over fifty years of age, all going to school to learn to read and write.

Students at the Burns Institute receive board, lodging and tuition for *four dollars a month*. The students raise on the school farm the great part of what they eat. They make their own bacon and hams in their smokehouses.

Thus a start has been made, but some of these people still grind their own wheat and corn. They reap their wheat with the sickle. They bring in their little bundles of wheat and do their threshing with flails, and usually the flail is not made of two pieces connected by a thong, but of one piece of hickory, the hinge being made by hammering and twisting the pole until the fibre is loosened into a hinge.

When the wheat is threshed they winnow it, much, perhaps, as they did in Palestine. A man takes a vessel of the wheat and holds it high as his head and pours it out a little at a time on the ground. Two other men stand at one side with a sheet or cloth, and

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with a peculiar whipping movement of the stretched sheet blow the chaff out of the wheat as it falls. Then the wheat is ready for grinding in the little handmill.

A few still have their spinning wheels and weave native cloth on old handlooms.

When one thinks that men and women of our own race still eat bread and wear clothing made in those primitive ways, still live without hope of education or betterment of their circumstances, you will not marvel at the wonderment of Mr. Hughes, and the absorbing interest he evinced in a condition, which, so far as many of these people are concerned, has not changed a great deal since his visit here some thirty-five years ago. Here is the raw material of citizenship — and no less an authority than my friend Professor MacKenzie assures me — material extremely sensitive to shaping influences and very responsive to them.

They are a simple, bold, honorable, generous and able people of splendid stock. Their lives are barren because isolation has barred opportunity. The governing factor of their health, their education and their citizenship is poverty, and their ignorance the most obvious result of their poverty. Rich in ancestry yet poor in this world's goods.

A Kentuckian has referred to them as "our contemporaneous ancestors." They do not know they are feudists. Their ignorance is their curse. Their lives present strange anomalies. The mother who teaches her daughter virtue, who teaches her son honor and the full keeping of his word, will deny herself to buy that son a pistol and tell him to avenge

the blood of his family. The feudist of the hills does his work treacherously. The code is assassination from ambush. Such is their unsophisticated brutality that to them this is not crime, but religion.

The feudist hides in the woods and other safe places and shoots at the unsuspecting member of the family of the other side to the dispute. Any member of the enemy's family is a fair mark in his eyes. Then the victim's relatives seek to avenge his death by killing the murderer or others of his kin. Such a feud may last for years; sometimes it has only ended with the wiping out of a family.

The feud was quite common in northern Europe in olden times, and family waged war on family and clan upon clan. The disputes grew to such an extent that they worked their own destruction. As civilization advanced the feuds were restricted more and more until finally they were abolished. This sensible process is happily developing in Kentucky today.

\* \* \* \*

Not long ago Mr. D. F. Crawford handed me a magazine article relating to the old feuds between the clans in the Highlands of Scotland, and it made special reference to the blood-thirstiness and treachery of the Sinclairs, as glorious a band of bare-legged cut-throats and cattle-lifters as ever drew claymore and laid the Sassenach low. Of any Sinclair it could well be said, to take a slight liberty with one of Burns verses:

“But bring a *Sinclair* frae his hill  
 Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,  
 Say, such is Royal Charlie's will,  
 And there's the foe;  
 He has nae thought but how to kill,  
 Twa at a blow.”

LETTERS TO MY SON

Remembering that my old friend Dr. Angus Sinclair of New York was a descendant of that ancient and illustrious Scottish house I thought it would be proper to send the paper to him, and the following is his amusing and inimitable acknowledgment:

New York, March 14, 1912

My dear William:

The cutting which you kindly sent me telling about the doings of the Auld Lang Syne Sinclairs is amusing if not edifying. I believe that I must be a lineal descendent of the ruffian who led his cousin into committing murder and then denounced her. What makes me believe that his bad blood has come along to me is, that I am suffering from rheumatism which I believe to be the painful manifestation of past iniquity. In future when any cruel twinge tortures my knee or hip joint, I shall exclaim damn that scoundrel whose sweetest thoughts ran on murder and the promotion of incestuous marriages.

One historical incident is omitted. There was a standing fued between the Sinclairs of Ulbster and the Campbells of Lorn. In one of the raids that the Campbells made on Ulbster, Duncan Campbell, the second son of Lorn, was taken prisoner. Instead of hanging him without loss of time the Sinclair chief locked the Campbell up for future use. It happened that this Sinclair had an ill-faured daughter known far and near as Muckle Moo'ed Meg. It was more than time that Meg was engaged helping to increase the number of the clan, but no man of marriageable age would agree to wed her. The Sinclair perceived in Duncan Campbell his opportunity, and offered his prisoner the option of marrying Meg or being hanged. Duncan agreed to the deal, but when the would-be bride was presented, he protested that he would prefer the "woody." As he was immediately led to the gallows tree, he protested that "hanging was nae better than it's ca'ed," and married the lass. In due time he led his wife into Lorn and their descendants became known as the ill-faured Campbells, former generations having been noted for their good looks.

THOMAS HUGHES

That tale, my dear William, redeems the name of Sinclair, for it needs a brave man to wed a wife notorious for ugliness, facial or otherwise.

Please extend my thanks to Mr. Crawford, some of whose forbears were close rivals, in deeds, to the Sinclairs.

Your old friend,

ANGUS SINCLAIR

\* \* \* \*

Everyone has heard authentic stories of the man who asked another, "Who is that old frump over yonder?" and got the reply, "She is my wife." But the story does not go far enough.

Jones observed an old lady sitting across the room.

"For heaven's sake," he remarked to Robinson, "Who is that extraordinarily ugly woman there?"

"That," answered Robinson, "is my wife."

Jones was taken aback, but moved up front again.

"Well," he said persuasively, "You just ought to see mine!"

\* \* \* \*

The ultimate redemption of the feudist of the hills — precious as the ray of educational sunshine feeble though it may be, which is beginning to shine upon them — lies in the civilizing influence of the railroad. This singular race of mountaineers is bound to vanish before the railroads and mining camps of the twentieth century. They unquestionably have large areas of virgin timber and their land is underlaid with coal, but without transportation it is of as little value as the corn of the early settlers of Western Pennsylvania who resisted the Federal taxation of whisky.

Unfortunately in eastern Kentucky, particularly in the mountains, land titles are not worth much.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

It is largely a matter of possession being nine points of the law, and it makes no difference whether a man has a title which goes back to the time of the settlement of the State, the man who owns the land for all practical purposes is the one who has possession. It is only within the last few years that action has been taken to protect land buyers.

\* \* \* \*

There are few colored folk living among or near them, and a darky, to some of these mountaineers, is almost as unknown as a locomotive.

\* \* \* \*

Our national habit of asking personal questions must undoubtedly be of English origin. It is characteristic of New England, but reaches its highest development among these untutored people, for everybody in the mountains asks the stranger (or "furriner" as they designate him) where he is going, what his name is, and what is his business. A course in mountain etiquette might be advisable before paying these people a visit. It is not mountain custom to shake hands and anything so effeminate as kissing is unknown, and to knock at a neighbor's door is a needless formality. While they are very keen on asking questions they are equally slow in answering them.

The mountaineer is very suspicious of "furriners" and does not open his arms to everyone from a world he dimly conceives has used him ill and certainly despised him. What else could be expected of people who from their cradles had known no one but their kind, and had been under no influence social, legal, religious or educational?

Even "Burns of the Mountains," leader and hero as he is and all praise to him, makes it no secret that he shrinks before the thought of the opening up of his country, at least before they have had time to educate their people and prepare them for it.

\* \* \* \*

There are great possibilities in that section of Kentucky, and if some of our ardent missionaries were to go into the mountains and teach those mountaineers how to live they would accomplish more good than by spending their time in China and other foreign countries, for there are men and women among them who do not even know that there are railroads or churches. Good roads would also be a blessing.

These unfortunate people must have a past, and generation of them follows generation to the dust but for them there has been no future. We have our foreign missions. We conduct splendid campaigns for the education of our new citizens. Education is literally carried to them and thrust upon them. We absorb and civilize hunkies and dagoes by the thousands, we shelter the outcast Jews of Europe but it does not seem to occur to us that charity might begin at home, and there is a wide field among these poor people.

\* \* \* \*

The uneducated are, perhaps, unjustly judged sometimes. To the ignorant both right and wrong are only instincts; when you remember their piteous and innocent confusion of ideas, the twilight of dim comprehension in which they dwell, we cannot but feel that the laws of more civilized men are too hard on

## LETTERS TO MY SON

them. We cannot judge them by our own standards. It is this phase of the mountaineer mind that must be considered.

To call him "degenerate" is a slander and a misuse of language. He is undeveloped — "backward" — where the rest of us were a hundred and fifty years ago, but degenerate not one whit. He is independent, self-respecting, willing to learn what he thinks is worth while, but difficult to urge and impossible to force; possessing in full vigor most of the traits that have made the Anglo-Saxons the dominant people of this continent. What he needs is to be "shown" and then to be let alone to work out his salvation as other men have.

\* \* \* \*

Our newspaper humorists used to poke a lot of fun at the mountaineers of the "dark and bloody ground," but that is a thing of the past.

The following screed is a good specimen. It is not known who wrote it:

Man born in the wiles of Kentucky is of feud days and easy virtue. He fisheth, fiddleth and fighteth all the days of his life. He shunneth water as a mad dog and drinketh much whisky.

He riseth even from his cradle to seek the scalp of his grandsire's enemy, and bringeth home in his carcase the ammunitions of his neighbor's wife's uncle's father-in-law who avengeth the deed.

Yea, verily his life is uncertain and he knoweth not the hour when he may be fired hence.

He goeth on a journey "half shot," and cometh back on a shutter, shot.

He rises in the night to let the cat out, and it taketh nine doctors three days to pick the buckshot from his person.

He goeth forth in joy and gladness, and cometh back in scraps and fragments.

THOMAS HUGHES

He calleth his fellow-man a liar and getteth himself filled with scrap iron, even to the fourth generation.

He emptieth a demijohn into himself and a shotgun into his enemy and his enemy's son lieth in wait on election day, and, lo, the coroner ploweth up a 40-acre field to bury the remains of that man.

## LETTER VII

THOMAS HUGHES

*(Continued)*

**N**O REFERENCE to the “poor mountaineers of the South” is complete without some mention of moonshiners and moonshining. Previous to the Civil War stills were about as frequent in those mountains as gristmills, and grain was “stilled” with as little thought of wrong-doing as it was ground for bread. The interference of the Government had long been regarded as a wanton attack on a natural right. Such was and is the mental attitude of the moonshiner. His conscience does not reproach him for selling liquor without a license after he has made it.

These mountaineers are by no means confined to Kentucky and the Cumberlands. They — the same shaggy, unkempt class of men, the same lean, yellow and attenuated women — are found in the Virginias, the Carolinas, Tennessee and Georgia, and even in Western Pennsylvania we can find a class much the same in Fayette and Somerset Counties, who are undoubtedly descendants of the men who resisted the Federal taxation imposed by the government in 1791, thereby causing what is known in history as the “Whisky Insurrection.” They practically withdrew themselves from the government they had helped to establish.

Secret whisky stills to this day continue to furnish transient consolation to the mountaineers of our neighboring counties, and so we see the "Whisky Insurrection" has not yet been entirely suppressed, although the day of the illicit distiller is passing.

In 1791 Congress passed a law laying duties on stills and on all whisky distilled in the United States. This bore heavily on the people of Western Pennsylvania as they had no other way by which to get money for their grain. There was no market except east of the Allegheny Mountains, and no transportation.

The farmer resented the law because whisky was the principal means by which he could convert his product into cash, and in the form of whisky a horse could pack the equivalent of ten bushels of grain.

The indignation of the people was universal; the farmer believed he had all but divine right to make his corn into whisky, just as he had the right to make his corn into meal. The people looked upon this duty as very like the taxes they had complained of under the English Government against which they had rebelled, and they rebelled again against what they regarded as unjust taxation.

The philosophy of the mountain distiller touching upon his vested rights in the manufacture of his corn into drinkables or eatables is not hard to digest. In fact, in my own time it has been recognized as logic in the courts. The trial of old Bill Pritts, a Somerset County "moonshiner" is a case in point. He was acquitted. And it was asserted at the time that half the cases made against "moonshiners" were made necessary by Federal law, not by the law of common

## LETTERS TO MY SON

sense. An *honest* juryman declined to vote that a man be sent to prison for an act which in his heart he could not brand as wrong, when the act was that of distilling his own whisky. So the ungodly flourish even on juries. In this case it was related that the jury sampled and drank up the evidence. Nor was there any popular protest against such conduct.

\* \* \* \*

By the way, our old friend Uncle Bill Andrews can tell you all about old Bill Pritts as he saw him many times in his boyhood days in Bedford County, and his recollections are not altogether *unsympathetic*. Old Pritts was a typical mountaineer, typical American if you please. This simple, godly soul, filled with the lure of life as handed down through generation after generation, said, "my folks made 'licker' ever since I can remember. My paw had two brothers. Both dead now but they were in a 'still' with paw for so many years that time don't take no reckoning of it, I guess. Paw and my two uncles held out that they was in legal trade. They never was bothered by revenuers nor no one came prying into their affairs at all."

\* \* \* \*

There is a story told of a Kentucky Congressman from one of the mountain districts. Just about the time the marble bathrooms were installed in that ancient pile, the House of Representatives, a delegation of mountaineers from his district paid Washington a visit and called on him, who was just at that moment laving his corporosity in a "sumptuous" bath tub. His unsophisticated secretary asked if he would show them into the apartment.

"Goddamn it, No!" roared the Congressman. "If these fellows thought that I didn't wash in the Potomac River and dry myself with my undershirt, they'd go back home and beat me."

\* \* \* \*

Congress later modified the law of 1791 but to no purpose, and finally President Washington, after ordering out fifteen thousand militia, proceeded to Bedford, whence he gave out instructions to General Lee of Virginia who marched his troops to Pittsburgh.

With this show of force the insurgents were awed into submission to the law. Many of the insurgents were imprisoned for various terms.

Our local historian, Dr. Erasmus Wilson, states that: "The story of this insurrection has in it more of thrilling interest than the best of the historical novels. The greatest men in the land, from President Washington down, were concerned in it. Among these were Albert Gallatin, Senator Ross, H. H. Brackenridge, Gen. Neville — in fact all the men of note in the State.

"The meeting on Braddock's field, August 1, 1794, was a particularly notable occasion. The town of Pittsburgh practically surrendered to the insurgents gathered there. These people had come to drive out or kill the agents of the Government, and threatened to loot the town. This was what the citizens most feared, and in order to avert it they had decided to join the insurgents, in sympathy, if not in sentiment.

"A committee of twenty-one, composed of leading citizens, followed by the town militia two hundred and fifty strong, under command of Gen. Wilkins,

## LETTERS TO MY SON

marched out to the camp of the insurrectionists. There they were met by about seven thousand men armed and ready either to parley or fight. And what was more to the point, they were in dead earnest and meant to shoot and kill.

“A series of resolutions, which had been passed at a meeting of citizens, expressing sympathy with the insurrectionists, and promising to use all possible influence with President Washington to secure a suspension of the objectionable excise law, and with Congress to secure its repeal, was presented and accepted.

“But this did not stop the President from calling for fifteen thousand troops and ordering them on to Pittsburgh at once. When they arrived in the latter part of October, our leading citizens had great times trying to square their actions on Braddock field with their claims of loyalty to the Government.”

\* \* \* \*

There is a breezy independence about these mountaineers, and the following story is quite refreshing in these days of graft and grab. The oldest son of old man Stills, who was very poor and had a large family on his hands, was invalided home from the Spanish war and died. The local authorities sent away and got a blank form of application to the government for funeral expenses, to which the family was entitled according to law. It was filled out, and given to the old man to sign. But Stills peremptorily refused to accept from the nation what was due his dead son. “I ain’t that hard pushed yet,” was his first and last word on the subject.

Yet these people have an eye to business.

"This is strange," exclaimed a traveller in the Pennsylvania "moonshine belt." "I placed my small satchel on this stump here, and walked a few yards to admire the scenery, and when I returned it contained a quart bottle of strong whisky."

"That's jes' the way with you city folks," said the mountain patriarch, "You don't give us credit for no intelligence. You think we wait for a house to fall on us when there is a dollar in sight."

\* \* \* \*

It is almost two generations now since Charles Kingsley, above referred to, the intimate friend of Thomas Hughes, and his school practically revolutionized English religion by their insistence on the importance of the doctrine of God's Fatherhood. "The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" came to be a current phrase of the religious market-places.

With the passing of time the phrase has worn a little thin, has it not? It was inevitable. It is quite possible for religious phrases to lose their validity and come in time to witness against the very hope which they once proclaimed and fostered.

"The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" was at first regarded as permanently banishing all the subtleties of theology from the sphere of religion.

Such an attraction one can understand. Half a century ago men longed, not unnaturally, to be delivered from a theology which was no longer very much alive. But they thought of theology as a thraldom from which they were about to escape permanently and finally. There they were grievously, hopelessly

## LETTERS TO MY SON

in the wrong. Theology is not necessarily a thraldom, and we cannot escape from it whether it is or no.

While religion lasts theology will last. It is the human side of religion. It is religion as it is seen after it has been introduced into the world of fact. Theology humanizes religion. It is the attempt to map out the facts of a revelation in the actual world of men. If it becomes lifeless and useless, it is because it no longer discharges the function of reconciling fact with idea.

Men have been wrong in thinking theology hurtful to religion. They were wrong in thinking a revelation so great, so profound, so revolutionary as that of man's spiritual kinship with God could exist without transforming the whole world of fact, the whole system of thought.

Today, thank God, we are beginning to be religious realists and not religion sentimentalists. We are beginning to understand that the real question of religion is whether we are to seek and establish eternal values, that it is the spirit of sacrifice to the uttermost that makes the only possible human brotherhood — that God's will is wrought not by manifestoes, but by martyrdom. The whole Christian religion is based on sacrifice. That is the lesson of Calvary.

## LETTER VIII

LORD COLERIDGE

WHEN Baron Coleridge, then Lord Chief Justice of England, visited the United States, as the guest of the New York Bar, though, informally, he was the guest of the nation at large, Cincinnati was included among his stopping places, and it was my privilege to meet him twice, the first time being on a short trip he made over the *Cincinnati Southern Railway* (the new name *Queen & Crescent* not then having come into use), and the second at a dinner given in his honor at the old St. Nicholas Hotel. On the second occasion it can only be said that I saw and heard him. Not so, however, going over the railway.

To my immense delight I went along on the trip as acting secretary to the President of the railroad and, although perhaps modesty should forbid the statement, on that day as it turned out, I happened to be a more or less useful person. Like our friend Uncle Frank Moore, Lord Coleridge had a habit of nodding off to sleep, only for a moment, in the middle of a conversation, but he did not lose the thread of it, so we see that sometimes great minds may nod as well as run in the same channels. Mr. Moore, by the way, was living temporarily in Boston when Lord Coleridge

## LETTERS TO MY SON

was the guest of General Benjamin F. Butler, then Governor of Massachusetts, and he saw him a number of times, and it was said that Lord Coleridge was greatly impressed with the personality of the "cock-eyed son of Destiny," and that they formed a warm friendship.

\* \* \* \*

Lord Coleridge very naturally asked about the early history of Kentucky and Ohio, and if ever a fellow was cocked and primed for an exam, so to speak, I was. As you young fellows say nowadays, I "smeared" it.

At that period I had been reading, and was still reading, not for amusement, but reading as an earnest student everything I could get my hands on concerning the History of the Colonial period, the formation of the United States and Territories, and particularly the History of the State which was then my home, and if the distinguished visitor had purposely based some of his remarks and historical enquiries on a previous knowledge of how most of my spare time had been used, they could not have come more aptly to my hand. Happily I had learned the lesson to be a good listener and was careful to answer only such questions as were directed to me. This, it is unnecessary to say, is not related for personal glorification, but simply to again illustrate to you how easy it is to acquire useful knowledge, and how easy it is to carry in one's head. Cultivate the habit of using odd unoccupied moments in learning something. Most of it is sure to be of value later. Keep your mind in practice. The fruit of this valuable and, as I think, delightful

## LORD COLERIDGE

habit, you will gather in years to come and it will be a constant pleasure in your later life.

He asked about Daniel Boone (a man of Welsh descent) and his company, the first white men\* to penetrate the Kentucky wilderness, and seemed pleased to know that it all happened during the Colonial period. He also spoke about Henry Clay and was interested to learn that the old Clay mansion, Ashland, near Lexington, was at that moment occupied by Clay's son-in-law, Major H. C. McDowell, whose surname is Scottish. It was under this hospitable roof that I tasted my first real mint julep.

\* \* \* \*

It used to be said that the easiest way to commit suicide was to call a Kentuckian a liar, or tell him he was a poor judge of whisky.

\* \* \* \*

A country gentleman in Virginia, of the old school, was entertaining a party of friends and they lingered in the dining room over their cigars. The decanter showed signs of wear and the mint bowl was waning, when the host called his butler and solemnly said, "Diggs, refill the decanter, and go out and *mow* some more mint."

\* \* \* \*

Probably the old-fashioned julep is in its decadence as a public drink, but it does not follow that the art of constructing this famous Southern refreshment is lost. On the contrary there are many old gardens where the mint bed under the southern wall still blooms luxuriantly; where the white fingers of household angels come every day at the right season of the year to

\*Mr. R. C. Stoll of Lexington tells me there was an expedition prior to Boone's but it did not result in any settlement and there is little record of it.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

pluck the aromatic herb with which to build a julep for dear old grand dad, who sits on the shady verandah, his mind wandering in the past back to the golden days of his youth. With her sleeves rolled up, the dainty granddaughter stirs sugar in a couple of tablespoons of crystal water, packs the heavy cut-glass tumbler with crushed ice, pours in the mellow spirit and then daintily thrusts the mint sprays into the crevices.

While I, personally, entirely dissent from his view, perhaps it was of the mint julep that the poet wrote:

One sip of this  
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight  
Beyond the bliss of dreams,  
Be wise and taste.

\* \* \* \*

But, to be serious, times are changing, and public sentiment especially on the question of drinking has changed too. Today Kentucky is almost a prohibition state. The situation could not be better stated than in the following lines taken from a humorous effusion by a member of the Kentucky bar:

Lay the jest about the julep in the camphor balls at last,  
For the miracle has happened and the olden days are past;  
That which makes Milwaukee thirsty does not foam in  
Tennessee,  
And the lid in old Missouri is as tight locked as can be—  
Oh, the comic paper Kurnel and his cronies well may sigh,  
For the mint is waving gaily, but the south is going dry!

\* \* \* \*

Lord Coleridge spoke of the relations of the States to the Federal power, and had a perfect understanding of the working of our Constitution, which is something that cannot be said of Englishmen as a rule, no matter what class of society or professional life they may hail from. Mr. W. B. Yeats, the Irish dramatic poet, has

## LORD COLERIDGE

somewhere stated that “Ignorance of history, not only of the world, but of their own country, is, it is to be feared, characteristic of the inhabitants of these islands.”

There was an enlightened Member of Parliament who remarked after the impeachment of Governor Sulzer: “Now that New York has got rid of its Governor, who is going to be Vice-President?”

\* \* \* \*

But the most wonderful evidence of the truth of Mr. Yeats’s remark was furnished by Sir Francis H. Champneys, Bart, who occupies the exalted position of President of the Royal Society of Medicine. In his opening address, printed in the official bulletin (1913) he says:—

“We read this morning in the paper that it is the jubilee celebration of the Amalgamation between the Northern and Southern States of America, at Gettysburg on July 4. Fifty years have elapsed since, in 1863, the victory at Gettysburg took place. It was a crucial period of the war, and after that the United States was formed. It is interesting to remember that, and to remember that it has taken fifty years not only to amalgamate but to consolidate the United States, which is another thing. And the proof of this is that the present President of the United States is the first Southern person who ever occupied that position. And I read in the *Times* today that he at first refused to be present at Gettysburg, fifty years after the defeat of his side; but that he afterwards reconsidered his action and determined to be present.

“I see in the papers that this meeting of the veterans on the field of Gettysburg is not altogether free from risk for them, and I see that a provident Government has stacked a thousand coffins in full view of the veterans in the park for anybody to take advantage of who feels inclined to do so.

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"At the time of the formation of the United States of America each State reserved its own peculiar rights; and with so much tenacity have they preserved them, that a man may be married in one State and not married in another."

At first blush we might be tempted to think that Sir Francis himself and his conceptions of the American Constitution are figments of some enterprising newspaper man's fertile mind. Not at all. He is a real Baronet. He is an M. A., M. D., (Oxon), and F. R. C. P. Of his education we read "Winchester (scholar); Brasenose Coll. Oxford; 1st class in science; Radcliffe Travelling Fellow."

\* \* \* \*

Nor is the operation of the Constitution quite clear to other peoples, as witness the irritating attitude of Japan over land legislation in the State of California, held by the Japanese government to be a discrimination against its citizens. The Federal power has no legal authority to interfere with State legislation in California, and the State has a perfect right to select her own company, and to protect her citizens from being crowded by aliens no matter whence they come. But perhaps the Japanese have an ulterior motive in not understanding. Their policy seems to run along the lines of the railroad labor unions. The latter always make demands, and they usually gain something by compromise, falsely called arbitration. So the Japanese continue to aim at the moon and usually manage to at least hit a chimney stack. In other words they always get something.

They have announced that South America is within "their sphere of influence." If there is any adage in

LORD COLERIDGE

Japanese philosophy that contains the idea of the inadvisability of "monkeying with a buzz saw," it should commend itself strongly to the elder statesmen at Tokyo. Japan's best asset in the past has been the friendship of the United States, and so it will be in the future if she is wise enough to cultivate it. To admit Japanese to citizenship would, I believe, be a gigantic national blunder. The Asiatic lives to himself and will always be an alien. Our customs, beliefs and patriotic sentiments do not touch him. It is as Kipling says, "East is east and West is west," and so it will remain. The fear of an industrial peril is a small part of the question. Japan is a great power and her aspirations are justly great. With her manufactured products she is knocking at the door of the markets of the world. That is one thing, but the absorption of Japanese into citizenship is another. We want people who will assimilate with us and there is no use trying this with Asiatics; it cannot be done. Their views of life are so diametrically opposed to ours that such a course is impossible.

\* \* \* \*

In their desire to prevent what they fear may be an inundation by Japanese, or, at any rate, over immigration of them, the people of California are not actuated by any assumption of race superiority. It is not a case of race prejudice. What does actuate them is a sense of race *difference*. Because two things differ from one another it is not a reason for believing that one is superior to the other. It is always more difficult to absorb that which is very different and unlike. The greater the unlikeness the greater the

## LETTERS TO MY SON

difficulty. The future of this nation and other nations like Canada and Australia, which issued from the British Isles, depends largely upon their power of absorption of successive additions to their numbers. If the process of absorbing certain additions be difficult or impracticable, then such additions should be rejected.

\* \* \* \*

No veneer of western civilization has mitigated the innate contempt, the burning detestation which the Japanese have *in excelsis* for all white men. Their view of the "white peril" finds expression in the refusal to allow foreigners to own land, because such ownership would be a "pollution of the sacred soil." In judging the attitude of California toward the settlement of Japanese in their midst it is well to keep these facts in mind.\*

Any attempt to mix the races would be to disturb both, like an attempt to effect a reconciliation between science and religion. Such attempts are a warning to science to keep within her own field, and any one who is watching the currents of thought today knows that the warning has begun to find heedful ears. The *entente* between them we welcome.

\* \* \* \*

Lord Coleridge seemed deeply impressed with the potentiality of the United States, yet it was not the mere size of the country which struck him most. He said, men are in human affairs the great factor of results; and men are great, not in proportion to the largeness, but in proportion to the smallness, of their natural

\*Note 1915. Before accepting all I have said on the Japanese question you had better give it some study. Since this manuscript was written two years ago my views have come under the modifying influence of our friend Major W. G. Lyddon, R.A., who is uncommonly well-informed on the subject.

advantages. Size is a commonplace incident in the history of a nation. Athens, Rome, Holland, England—all these places and powers have affected the destinies of mankind, and every one of them had but a little bit of the earth's surface to stand upon. Someone has said that the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi and the Amazon were better worth knowing about than the Tiber or the Orontes or the Illyssus, because they pour into the sea untold more millions of gallons of water every hour than the smaller rivers—that the battle of Marathon was not worth knowing about because the slaughter was not great. But the battle of Marathon stayed the tide of the Persian War, and rolled back the waves of barbaric invasion; if the battle of Marathon preserved for us the art, the poetry, the philosophy, the history, the oratory, the intellect, the freedom of the Greek nation it was far more worth knowing about than all the fearful slaughters of Genghiz Khan, Attila, Julius Caesar or the First Napoleon, the four greatest butchers\* that a merciful God ever suffered to sweep over and devastate His earth.

What he did admire was the hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of comfortable solid houses, more or less large, lived in and occupied by the owners of them; intelligent farmers owning their farms; "your cultivated and educated gentlemen," he said, "own their houses, your artisans and working people own their cottages. They are their own houses and, therefore, are precious to them. If they improve them they improve them for themselves. If, in Scriptural language, they 'plant a vineyard' they, or their children, eat the fruits thereof. What a state of satisfaction and

\*Note 1915. They pale into nothingness before modern Prussianism.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

content this produces in time of peace, and what an irresistible force it gave you when the war broke out.

"This is your great glory; this is your real greatness; this is your happiness—keep it—guard it, cling to it, never let it go, never be betrayed into the pursuit of the false glitter but real misery and discontent which always have followed, which always will follow in the train of feudalism. Believe me, there is not in the mind of any honest Englishman a trace of jealousy, a shade of grudge when he thinks of the magnificence of your future and your present grand development."

'Tis not the clod beneath our feet we name  
Our country. Each heaven-sanctioned tie the same,  
Law, manners, language, faith, ancestral blood,  
Domestic honour, awe of womanhood.

\* \* \* \*

Lord Coleridge indicated a hope that the people of the two great English-speaking countries would understand each other better, would, indeed, see the necessity of understanding each other better, not only because in our commercial relations England was and is our best customer—she takes more of our products than all the rest of Europe put together—but for mutual protection.

It was difficult to see the point of the last proposition at that time when the sentiment of the average citizen in this country was decidedly anti-English, when, indeed, the Irish vote controlled politically all our great cities, and when the activities of so-called Irish patriots in England and Ireland were punctuated by the dagger and the blunderbuss; when their campaign was maiming cattle, assassination and dynamite—conducted largely from New York, and financed wholly by American money.

#### LORD COLERIDGE

Lord Coleridge knew that the Irish Brotherhood in New York had sentenced him to death for the part he had taken in the trial of dynamite conspirators, and his Government had especially warned him not to go to Canada, and with great regret he had to abandon that part of his program.

\* \* \* \*

It was not until the administration of Mr. Abram S. Hewitt, many years afterward, that the Irish flag was discontinued as one of the emblems of civic authority in New York. It ceased to float over City Hall on St. Patrick's day or any other day after he came into power.

\* \* \* \*

The comic papers of thirty to forty years ago tell the story. The following illustrates it.

A newly arrived Irishman had just passed through Castle Garden and was wandering aimlessly along the street. He was suddenly stopped by the sight of a familiar face, and to his utter astonishment the owner of the face was radiant in a new uniform and swinging a club. "How is this O'Brien?" said the new comer, "an' ye only left Ireland tree monts ago."

"Oh, Mr. Meehan," said the policeman, "it was all throo' the polutical unflooence of me brother Mike, who is an Alderman in the City of New York."

"Yes, but Mike didn't lave Ireland more than six months ago himself."

"That's all right me bhoy, but our Mike is a shmart lad. He wouldn't lave the ould counthry until they gave him the nomination for Alderman."

## LETTERS TO MY SON

We must not pass the Irish flag without remarking that the national color of Ireland is not green. It is, and always has been blue, (that is, heraldic blue, ultramarine, not as some people have thought, sky blue). Green never was the national color of Ireland. The national color is taken from the ground of the arms. Similarly the ribbon of the Order of St. Patrick is sky blue.

\* \* \* \*

When the Brooklyn Bridge was finished in the early eighties the Irishmen of New York made a formal protest against its being opened on Queen Victoria's birthday, lest this chance occurrence should be misconstrued into a compliment to England.

In those days there was a newspaper published in New York which was called *The United Irishman*, and one of the funny papers of the period came out with a jest at its expense. It was the statement that its name was a contradiction in term because no more than one Irishman could unite.

\* \* \* \*

None of this record is in the most remote sense intended as the slightest reflection on Ireland or Irishmen. It is merely the statement of a condition well within the recollection of men still young, or who at least, like myself, try to keep young. And to keep young there is no stimulus equal to the companionship of youth. It is a source of inspiration. Remember this.

## LETTER IX

LORD COLERIDGE

(*Continued*)

**S**O far as the Irish race and the “Big” church are concerned, I hold, and have always held, that whether we like it or dislike it, all serious-minded people of every faith must admit that the Roman Catholic Church is the cement which more than any other one single agency is holding civilization together, for if its influence were removed, Socialism and Anarchy would rise rampant in the world. The debt of civilization to the Catholic Church is one of the greatest single debts in the world. It has a history extending over a period of nearly two thousand years, and embraces some two hundred millions of the human race as its adherents.

Reverence is due to this great fundamental force in modern civilization working toward the common coming of the Kingdom for which every earnest man and woman is striving, each in his own way, and, by striving, becomes the brother of all men.

\* \* \* \*

The first thought for each of us is whether his own religion is good; whether it is vital and active; whether it is allied with what is best in us against what is worst; whether it increases our respect for the consciences of

others. Who is my neighbor? That is the question of today. Let narrowness be set aside and the mighty forces of Christianity work together in the spirit of witnessing for the truth by all the forms of testimony that can reach mankind.

Little by little, the conviction is growing and spreading among our Protestant bodies that the various and particular religious tenets which each holds are of comparatively small importance; that they are fundamentally the same; that the emphasis in religion should be laid upon a broader charity, and upon character and regard for others; that the thing to strive after is to make life here and now better and happier for every one. Having insensibly and unconsciously come to this view, though some are not yet quite prepared to admit it in the broad question of the uplift of the human race, the unimportance of doctrinal, sectarian, and ecclesiastical sub-divisions has become so apparent that the churches are drawing together as never before, working in harmony for a common object, and religious intolerance is gradually becoming less acute. Men of all faiths are day by day finding that their agreements are greater than their differences, and that even while differing they can do much together in united effort and in united service. Is it not obvious that our differences are largely differences in the degree to which we cling to inherited beliefs and practices because they have the comfortable sanction of old use and custom?

The so-called heathen world can never become convinced of the superiority and desirability of Christianity until its discordant sects get together and adopt a common platform, not of belief necessarily, but of

spirit and effort for the uplift of all mankind. There are many signs that the time is approaching when this will be accomplished, and one of the surest of them is the waning of intolerance, and in this respect, our own church occupies most advanced and rational ground. We stand for church unity and we need to realize the strength of the forces which confront our common Christianity today. Let us seek for points of agreement rather than the reverse, and avail ourselves of every opportunity for working with other communions for the social and moral welfare of our nation. Let us ask ourselves what are the things which in the providence of God the various communions may contribute toward this great and richly varied comprehensive catholicity of the future reunited church. This is the great question for the Protestant bodies to work out. When this is accomplished, then, and not till then, can there be common ground with the Catholic Church.

Many Episcopalians who hold moderate views doctrinally and ecclesiastically, maintain that our church occupies an exceptionally favorable position as a center of future union between the extremes of Christendom. She alone, they say, can offer herself as a mediator to the sacerdotalism of Rome on the one side, and the evangelicalism of Protestant dissent on the other. This might seem to put the church in the role of a Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, and it may have its disadvantages as well as its advantages. To take a political analogy, Mr. Taft was commended to the West as the inheritor of Roosevelt's policies, and to the East as a means of escape from Roosevelt himself. You remember what came of that. Lowell cleverly expresses this thought:

“This gives you a safe pint to rest on  
And leaves me frontin' North by South.”

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Bishop Greer of New York, the largest and most influential diocese in the United States, thus expresses himself, "The great battles of civilization are fought in the cities, and New York is a world centre where forces gather which tend to make and mold the world. We in this city are working out a problem of civilization unprecedented in the history of mankind. The vital element in that problem is to get the consciousness of God into the lives of the people, and to that end I am willing to co-operate with Roman Catholic priests, Presbyterian missionaries and Salvation Army lassies. So far as I can direct the policy of the Episcopal church in the Diocese of New York she will go forward to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, with malice toward none and charity toward all."

\* \* \* \*

In 1869, Dean Stanley\* administered the communion in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey to a body of scholars and divines, including Scottish Presbyterian ministers and English non-conformists, none of whom had been confirmed. Dean Stanley was severely criticized by certain extreme Anglicans and the incident was brought to the attention of Dr. Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury, who fully upheld the action of Dean Stanley, saying: "I hope that we may see in this Holy Communion an omen of a time, not far distant, when our unhappy divisions may disappear, and, as we serve one Savior and profess to believe in one Gospel, we may all unite more closely in the discharge of the great duties which our Lord has laid on us of preparing the world for His second coming."

\*See paper on Charles Dickens.

The essence, the substance, the reality of a religious life is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to teach the ignorant, to watch by the sick, to comfort the mourners, to pray to Almighty God, to live simply and by rule, and, in short, to use this world as not abusing it—these are things, happily, which both Catholics and Protestants think right; alike are bound by the precepts of their religion to practice, and if they do not practice them themselves, they are at least bound to respect and reverence those who do.

Why should one stop to ask what the man who is doing good work alongside of him believes, or criticise him if he happens to learn that he has opinions different from his own? It is possible, while holding ardently to one's own faith, to do justice to the beliefs of others. As members of one army, however our uniforms may differ, let us get close together. Let us learn to know and esteem each other better, in order that we may pursue together the common ideal. This is the essence of morals. As Tom Moore has so well put it in his lines beginning:—

“Shall I ask the brave soldier who fights by my side  
In the cause of mankind, if our creeds agree?  
Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried,  
If he kneel not before the same alter with me?”

\* \* \* \*

My religious sentiments, it is true, are by no means in unison with those of my many close and warm Catholic friends, but what I have said I feel free to say. It is all very well for every man to go to Heaven unmolested and by his own route, but that is not the vital issue, for sooner or later the Christian forces of the world will be called upon to stand together for

LETTERS TO MY SON

their own preservation. They must stand together against agnostic socialism or perish in detail.

All of this, I am well aware, is a most complex subject. But there are other everyday subjects not less so. Of liberty, we have been told on the best authority, there are two hundred definitions. Even the conservative name of Public Opinion has many shades.

\* \* \* \*

It is quite true that you can go to Washington with equal comfort and safety on either the *B. & O.* or the *P. R. R.* I had an old friend in Cincinnati, the Reverend Father Venniman. He called on Mr. Ingalls, President of the *Big Four Railroad*, and asked him for a pass to New York. Mr. Ingalls demurred saying the clergy got half rates and that ought to be enough in the way of concession.

"But," pleaded the priest, "my parish is a mighty poor one, and is largely made up of your own employes."

"All right," said Mr. Ingalls facetiously, "Let us make a bargain. I'll give you a pass to New York if you give me a pass to heaven."

"Done," said Father Venniman, "but you must go by *my route*."

And for once the old man took second money.

\* \* \* \*

There is no doubt about the correctness of this story. You can paste the cherry tree label on it. I have heard both Mr. Ingalls and Father Venniman repeat it.

## LETTER X

LORD COLERIDGE

(Continued)

**L**ORD COLERIDGE, on his visit to Washington, sat with the Supreme Court. The records of the Court show that he was the first person,\* not a member of the Court, ever so honored.

On his return to England Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, wrote to Lord Coleridge:

“I think you have performed a public service by your excursion to America. I would like to see the two countries married at all points, and you have married them at one important and vital point, namely, in their legal profession. And have you done or thought anything, or do you see your way, as to getting some competent person to study and then write upon the social state and movement of America which is almost a sealed book to us, while even of its material condition we are but roughly and loosely informed?”

It remained for James Bryce, long afterward, to rise to this great opportunity in his masterly *American Commonwealth*. This work was published years before he came to Washington as the Ambassador of Great Britain, an office he filled for six years assiduously, loyally, with tact and with remarkable success. Mr. Bryce probably knew this country as no other Englishman—no other Englishman who had not practically spent his life here—ever knew it, by observation, by prolonged† and close study, and by intercourse with

\*In later years this compliment was extended to Baron Herschell and Lord Reading.

†Mr. Bryce made his first visit to the United States in 1870.

great numbers of leading men. His searching analysis of things American has extended over the better part of two generations, and his studies have been universally esteemed for their penetration and impartiality. It may be fairly said that the impression created by James Bryce on the American people will rank in history as second only to that of the revered Queen Victoria, and that it will be an enduring bond between Great Britain and the United States. When the Queen died I felt that a great light had gone out. She was, in a sense that may be felt and understood but not explained, my Queen. Victoria was a Queen in the highest, I might almost say, divinest sense. To you she is history. You and I quite naturally cannot see the day, but it will come, when the English speaking peoples of the world, and they are rapidly growing and drawing more closely together, will reverentially speak of *Saint Victoria*, and not the least devout of them will be the people of these United States.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Bryce is a public speaker of an effective and unusually interesting type.

\* \* \* \*

Anti-English sentiment was largely fostered—quite apart from any Irish question—by the anti-British coloring—the distorted history formerly printed in school-books. There has not been a word written about the marvelous century of peace between the two nations, not one reference to the historical fact that along the great 4000-mile boundary line that separates Canada from the United States there has not for a hundred years been a single soldier doing

sentry duty on either side. No doubt anti-British sentiment was aggravated by the attitude of England, correct as it was, with one possible exception, during the Civil War. Both North and South at that time were eager to enlist on its own side the sympathies of Europe, and of England in particular. This was at first suggested by a possible intervention. Each imagined that England would take part. The North relied on her hatred of slavery, the South on her hunger for cotton, and unquestionably both the government and the people of England were much divided in sympathy. As time wore on these hopes, or fears, were deferred until they were no longer seriously entertained. Any English statesman, not a madman, knew that the idea of interference would have been spurned at once, and that even the most friendly and benevolent offer of mediation would have been as quickly misrepresented.

This anti-English feeling was still further accentuated by the Alabama Claims' dispute, following the Civil War, and then fresh in everybody's mind and frequently referred to. As a matter of fact the Alabama Claims' dispute was not finally closed until 1885.

Much of this feeling was based on wrong information; just in the sense that the people of the South at that time totally misunderstood the people North, and in this connection the Spanish War in 1898 was a blessing in disguise, in that it brought the two sections of the country together and let them meet each other face to face united in a common cause, and under one flag. It was this Spanish War and the Boer War following which made the people of the United States

## LETTERS TO MY SON

and Great Britain see each other in an entirely new light since 1823 when they shook hands for the first time over the Monroe Doctrine.\*

\* \* \* \*

Prejudice is deep-rooted in human nature. Like most other elemental characteristics, doubtless it has its origin in the instinct of self-preservation. In primitive times the mere fact that a stranger belonged to another tribe cast the shadow of suspicion on him, because the chances were that the other tribe was hostile. Even after man learned to live together with occasional spasms of peace, the feeling of distrust toward people of different race, nationality or creed still persisted. Many are the crimes that can be laid at the door of this human failing.

\* \* \* \*

In 1897 Mr. John Hay, then United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James, wrote, in an entirely confidential spirit of course, to Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, at that time First Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the first McKinley administration; he said:

“I try to hold the scales as level as I can over here, not kissing them nor kicking them. I have received a great deal of kindness from all sorts of people, and have read a lot of abuse of my country from all sorts of papers. I used rather to think we had a monopoly of abusive newspapers, but I really believe these people are our equals in vituperation.

“It is a curious fact that while no Englishman, not a madman, wants to fight us, and no American, not an idiot, wants to fight England, there is never a civil word printed about England in America, and rarely a civil word about us printed in England. Whether this ill-will is all historical, or partly prophetic, I cannot say.

\*See Letter XXIII.

LORD COLERIDGE

"I implore my friends at Washington not to be too nasty in their talk about John Bull; for every idle word of theirs I get banged about the lot till I am all colors of the rainbow."

It was in the early days of the republic that exaggerated and colored notions were allowed to falsify incident and perspective, and this emphasis was very naturally supplemented by the attitude of a population whose fathers and grandfathers had fought the two wars against England. In addition thereto the difficulties of communication prevented intercourse and quite naturally fostered prejudice. Mr. W. D. Howells, the novelist, the son of English parents, tells of the opprobrium which in his boyhood in the "forties" his immediate descent won for him among his companions.

No historic importance seems to have been given on either side to the sincere Tory feeling in America and the sincere Whig feeling in England. There is no excuse for either side, and the mischievous feature of it all has been that even today so many people have no idea that such sentiments ever existed. England especially must reproach herself with a neglect of American history that leaves public school and university men to this day ignorant of the Civil War, or a teaching of it that makes a main cause of the Revolution the desire of many colonists to repudiate their debts. In a previous letter I have cited one or two conspicuous illustrations of this neglect, and sad enough to relate, others might be given. But let us "gently scan our brother man." Let us "bear and forbear." Today the question is not merely of the good will of two peoples, but of world peace and the security of our

common civilization; not of minor factors making towards it, but of the greatest.

\* \* \* \*

Someone has remarked that for centuries history has been an uninterrupted conspiracy against truth. Rather is it in some degree a guess based on insufficient hearsay. History is material for superstition. It is not merely that history contains great errors of fact; our understanding of whole eras and the course of human events in them is often faulty and erroneous because of the materials from which it is formed. It should not seem strange, therefore, that American history has been perverted in so many instances. There are dozens of cases to be found in which the writers of our records have shown a woeful ignorance or carelessness in trying to find out the facts. Biography is the essence of history, but instead of weaving from a thousand threads, gathered from as many places, the fabric of our early history, it would seem that the main stories have simply been compiled by one writer from the other without any attempt to verify facts. All good history seeks to show not simply the achievements of a government, and of the men who were foremost in its direction, but the habits and the affairs of the great body of the people—their manners, their customs, their modes of living, their inventions, their industries, their diversions and their relation to religion, to education, and social betterments. We must know something of the forces of civilization which make history.

History invites neither our praise nor our blame but only our understanding. If Julius Caesar could

LORD COLERIDGE

come back to earth there is probably nothing that would astonish him more than the repute these few words of Shakespeare have fastened upon him: “The foremost man in all this world!”\* For it has not required any considerable part of the research of the last two centuries to give the conqueror of Gaul his true proportions. Yet in spite of the authentic proof of Caesar’s shortcomings, both in war and statecraft, such is the persistence of a legend once launched that centuries cannot restore the true proportions.

\* \* \* \*

It has been said that in the three hundred years since the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Bay we have developed a distinctive American mythology. Many of the most picturesque stories of our early annals, it is said, are purely apocryphal, while others, certain unbelievers assert, are open to general suspicion. We would not, for all the world, speak with disrespect of the *Mayflower* or her precious human freight. She, together with her sister ships which preceded her to Virginia, gave to history many honored names. They founded America. They did more—they gave to the United States of today the proudest and most numerous aristocracy on earth.

When William the Conqueror landed on the south coast of England he brought with him a galaxy of Norman Knighthood, and many of their descendants may still be found. But they are at best an insignificant company by comparison with those of our people whose ancestors sailed with the *Mayflower*. William probably crossed the Channel in a mere cockle shell with half a company of chivalry.

\**Julius Caesar*, Act. IV, Scene 3.

The *Mayflower* must have been an excursion boat of a pre-Fulton *Imperator* type. She was clearly no little ship such as credulous history believes in but a mammoth liner. Of course, she did make more than one trans-atlantic voyage carrying her human cargo of the Fuller-Blooded of her troublous times. But mathematical accuracy compels the assertion that in counting up the number of persons in these United States whose families came over with the *Mayflower*, the good ship clearly had stateroom accommodation for 5000 souls on each journey, even when allowance is made for the descendants of the crew and stewards.

\* \* \* \*

Two Harvard men were discussing the matter of family trees and one of them said, "You know my ancestor came over on the *Mayflower*."

"Oh," remarked the other, "you haven't so very much on our people. My ancestor was right behind him. He crossed on the *Juneflower*."

\* \* \* \*

But we must not dismiss this question of aristocracy as a scaffold jest. It would be amusing were it not for the melancholy obsession one sees in certain limited sections of the American mind, for the American people as a whole, true, or wise or sad enough to relate, have small regard for aristocracy, and the most ridiculous feature of it all is the claim of superiority we hear made, not of course by, but on behalf of the descendants of colonists who settled one section of the country as against another. It has only been in comparatively recent times, to be sure, dating mainly from the Civil War period, that a Cavalier presumed to arrogate a precedence over a Puritan. It was

#### LORD COLERIDGE

Robert Toombs,\* of Georgia, who declared in 1860, "We are the Gentry of the Country." In this Mr. Toombs (Bob Toombs as his admirers called him when I was a young man in the South) great and unreconstructed as he was and remained until the day of his death, was unfair or unjust or speaking for a political purpose, or at any rate quite incorrect.

It would be difficult to give a better illustration of this sectional sentiment and at the same time a better bit of unconscious humor than the following: There was a young fellow in a Mississippi regiment during the Civil War who never failed somehow to get in the clear when a fight was on. All the boys knew him and liked him, and knew he was dead game, but he had lost his nerve and was proof alike against the jibes of his comrades and the threats of his officers. One morning the approach of the enemy was heralded by a few shells bursting suggestively near the position of his company, and the young man got ready to retire. His captain lost patience at last and immediately ordered him in line on pain of instant death.

"Shoot away Captain," the soldier drawled, "I don't mind being murdered by a high-tone Southern Gentleman like you, Cappen, but damned if I'm guyen to eternally disgrace my family by lettin' one of *them low-bred Yankees* shoot me."

\* \* \* \*

Some things are reasonably certain in this world, the law of gravitation for example, and another was Mark Twain's sense of humor. In his personal relations Mark was the most charming of men and he

\*Toombs was the first Confederate Secretary of State.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

laughed himself when he spoke of *unconscious* humor and he told the foregoing story as an illustration of it.

\* \* \* \*

The early colonists of Virginia and New England certainly did not themselves raise any such social distinction, for we read\* that there was a continued communication between them and that they married and gave in marriage. They made no pretense to caste. As early as 1634 there was an established trade, the sunny South exchanging grain for the cod-fish of New England, and the appearance in the records of Virginia even at that period of such Puritan surnames as Cotton, Eyre, Hutchinson, Andrews, Blackstone, How, and such Christian names as Obedience, Prudence, etc., positively supports this statement.†

Nothing could have been more natural than that Massachusetts should have sent her sons to share in the rich untenanted lands of the South, spreading out into warmer places than the chilly rocks where the Puritans “rescued the land from the Devil.” They doubtless had an eye on its trade too, always attractive to the Puritan element then as now, and it is certain that some portions of Virginia, due to nearly three centuries of isolation, remain more purely English in origin and descent than that of any part of the world with the exception of rural England itself. The guides at the Revel’s Island Club (duck shooting and fishing) afford an excellent example of this. There can be no mistaking the origin of such names as Elton, Bowen, Sturgis, Bloxom, Parker, Johnson, Brooks, etc. They

\**The Early History of the Eastern Shore of Virginia*, by I. C. Wise.

†The historian Fiske just as positively contradicts it in his *American Revolution*, page 7: “To the merchant of Boston, the Virginia planter was *still almost a foreigner*, though the one and the other were pure-blooded Englishmen.” I stand by the text nevertheless, if for no other reason than the fact that Fiske modifies, almost reverses his assertion later on, pages 25 and 122 same volume.

are God-fearing, clean, sober and sturdy men of unmixed blood. In their quarters before meals, one of the number invariably invokes the blessing of the Almighty. Oddly enough in the old Virginia names not a Mac nor an Irish "O" appears.

\* \* \* \*

It is a matter of fact that Englishmen of every social order came to Virginia, including the white servant, and it is utterly absurd to suppose, as so many appear to do, that the early colonists of Virginia were exclusively, or even to any great extent, Cavaliers or "Gentlemen."

At this period, or to be exact, in 1630 the rank of the Gentry was established and it had a meaning and cause and a precise status which was defined in England, not by a Ward McAllister of the day, but by recognized authority. It would seem to follow, therefore, that those of our people who put forward the claim to be "gentry" can only be so by descent and under this definition and no other, and it is clearly stated, since there has been no subsequent provision made to cover the formal and exclusive use of the term.

\* \* \* \*

The Colonists of Virginia and much less the Carolinas, never did establish an aristocracy of rank in this sense, but merely an imitation of such a class which was liable to be and constantly was invaded by any interloper that invested capital in slaves, and all slave-owners usurped the name of "gentleman." Thus an aristocratic form, a spurious imitation of what you may call if you please, although I won't agree with you, a bad original, was imposed upon the infant settlements.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

It is only the proportion of the Cavalier element which can be questioned, and a genealogical expert like Bishop William Meade\* of Virginia, in *The Old Churches and Old Families of Virginia*, states that:

“There are two hundred families in Massachusetts having as great a claim, through traditions and the use of coats-of-arms, to the rank of Gentlemen as the bulk of the patrician families of Virginia. We have therefore to glean, here and there, little fragments of truth, to prevent our styling the entire claim of the Cavaliers a bold fabrication. A very few Virginia families can be thus proved to have sprung from the English Gentry.”

Bishop Meade gives the following meagre list, and any other authorities are still wanting. He names the families of Ambler, Barradell, Baylor, Bushrod, Burwell, Carter, Digges, Fairfax, Fowke, Harrison, Jacqueline, Lee, Lewis, Ludwell, Mason, Nottingham, Robinson, Sandys, Spottiswood and Washington, and he goes on to say:

“I believe I have omitted none, and I have rather strained a point in admitting some. I do not, of course, mean to deny that others may exist, but until the proofs are submitted to examination there is no justice in presuming them to exist.”

\* \* \* \*

Our civilization is predominatingly commercial and there are no social traditions to maintain, nevertheless, it is true that in our social evolution the middle class do not choose to stay middle class when they climb to wealth. Take *newer* people like the Astors or the Vanderbilts, who could not by any stretch of imagination be referred to as *gentry*, and lots of other equally and highly representative families. They have enjoyed wealth for several generations and a person cannot

\*Bishop Meade died in Richmond in 1862. He was the son of Colonel R. K. Meade who was one of General Washington's aides. Our friend and neighbor, the Reverend Robert E. Meade, is a great-grandson of the Bishop.

with impunity live in a well-equipped and splendidly conducted home, be surrounded with good paintings and sculpture and architecture and kindred refining influences. Something happens after a time, no matter how vulgar he may be, for a family cannot be rich a second and third generation without discovering some aesthetic truths, but the ascendancy, the prestige of our *older* people like the Winthrops of New England, the Lawrences of New York or the Lees of Virginia, is something altogether different. No one heard these names mentioned in connection with the long defunct "400" of Ward McAllister and Mrs. Astor. They were apart from and above it. We cannot compare New York to Paris or London. Paris will always be Paris, the great garden in which flowers the art of the world, and London will always be the home of our soul. In this sense Paris is the intellectual capital of civilized Latin America. New York can never usurp the intellectual and spiritual privileges of these cities. So the relation which the newer people bear socially and culturally to these older American families has not inaptly been compared to that of our State Universities to William and Mary, or Harvard, and as you look down the *endless line* from the Astors and Vanderbilts to the latest social aspirant, the more pointed is the illustration. Oh! *Vanitas Vanitatum!* Shades of Thackeray!

It was the always brilliant John Hay, and although he was pestered to distraction in London, his sense of humor never failed him, who remarked that so many of his countrymen sought first to get on, then to get honor and afterwards to *get honest*, and finally to be *socially prominent*.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

The sort of snobbishness Mr. Hay had in mind is well illustrated by the remark of the undergraduate that *our fraternity never took in a man unless his family was socially influential in his community.*

It is difficult to understand just what this phase of “man’s inhumanity to man”\* may mean to people who are not above it or indifferent to it. The view for the thoughtful person is where will it lead? What of the individual spirit ever struggling for greater freedom of expression? Is it possible that we shall be increasingly unable to be democratic in our spirit? We must not arrest thought and stunt the individual spirit, for without the individual spirit there can be no true American spirit. We must preserve the democratic principles without which this nation cannot survive.

\* \* \* \*

Crossing on the *Cedric* in one of the usual smoking room gab-fests a gentleman remarked that his ancestor was entitled to bear arms before the family left England over two hundred years ago.

“Yes,” said one of the party who had been listening in silence and patience, “and for over two thousand years my forbears in Scotland have been entitled to *bare legs.*”

\* \* \* \*

And errors in many of our great national pictures are common. I do not allude to errors in technique, but in natural or historical facts. There is, for example, that historic anachronism, “Washington Crossing the Delaware” with the sun rising an hour after midnight in December, and the American flag, not then in existence, proudly floating in the breeze.

\*Robert Burns. *Man was made to Mourn.*

In the painting of the landing of Columbus, which used to be reproduced on the back of the \$5 bank notes, the artist has painted three flags. They are all well drawn, but one is blowing east, one west, and one south, which indicates a rather variable condition of the wind on that famous day.

In the picture of the Surrender of Cornwallis, General Washington is conspicuous, seated upon a white horse. But General Washington was not present at the surrender. Cornwallis did not surrender his army in person, but sent a subordinate officer to do so. Accordingly, Washington detailed an officer of corresponding rank to receive the surrender. It would not have been military etiquette for Washington to be present.

Imperfect as the record of our later history may be, it is even more so in the period from the arrival of Columbus to the settlement of Jamestown, a stretch of nearly a century and a quarter. In 1526 Spain began a colony on the banks of the James River, near where Jamestown was founded eighty years later. They built a town and called it San Miguel, but this attempt to found a permanent settlement proved abortive as disease and internal strife wiped it out and the few survivors sailed away in search of other adventure. One event in the history of San Miguel was ominous of the future, for the failure of this colony was mainly due to an insurrection of the negro slaves the Spanish brought with them. Thus we see that many years before the Dutch deposited their first unfortunate cargo of negro slaves at Jamestown, slavery had existed on Virginia soil and had destroyed

the happiness of the first white occupants of the land, imperiled their safety and led to the ultimate destruction of their colony. The first Dutch slave trader came to Jamestown in 1619 with twenty colored people for sale. The settlers bought them and then and there commenced the trouble which was to worry the whole nation for nearly two centuries and a half, and which was to be got rid of at last at the cost of a million lives and billions of treasure. If they had ordered that Dutchman to be gone with his colored captives, what a different story the history of our country might have been.

\* \* \* \*

There are a number of questions in doubt regarding our flag which will never be satisfactorily settled, and the three chief things in doubt are when was the first American flag, as we know it, unfurled, who suggested it, and who made the first one that was used?

I believe there can be little doubt that the three stars and the three stripes contained in the Washington arms, still in position over the old doorway of Sulgrave Manor House, in the village of Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, furnished the idea for the American flag. Tradition attributes the suggestion to Benjamin Franklin. The stars signify divine influence guiding the bearer in the right way, while the bars or stripes denote one who sets the bar of conscience and religion against wicked temptations and evil desires. The colors, red and white, seem to follow also; the red meaning military bravery and fortitude; the white peace and sincerity.

LORD COLERIDGE

Notwithstanding the obscurity of its early history, the flag stands for more than commerce, more than gain. It should be a thing of reverence and love, and only used when meant to elicit the purest of patriotic emotions.

When Sousa, the famous band master, was performing in England, one of his concerts was graced by the presence of King Edward. Sousa always began his concerts with "The Star Spangled Banner" and the King immediately stood. In a second the audience caught on and everybody was standing. At the close of the concert Sousa played "God Save the King" and of course everybody was standing. In this respect the average American audience should be ashamed of itself.

In recent years, however, it is happily becoming a custom for audiences and general public gatherings to regard the playing of the national anthem as the signal to rise, and stand uncovered as a patriotic tribute to the flag. No one will deny the poetry and beauty of the custom. It testifies outwardly and to the naked eye of that sentiment of love of country which is the very first of a nation's assets. It is bad taste and poor patriotism to use the flag as a catchpenny device. It is too often grossly misused by being hooked on to the attempt to annex the nimble dollar, and certainly every self-respecting American should resent its being made an adjunct of the dollar mark.

\* \* \* \*

Senator Lodge in his *Life of Washington*, in the *Statesman Series*, deals very frankly and clearly, as you will remember, with the question of historical inac-

curacy and tells of Parson Weems and his idealized biography of the "Father of His Country." It is doubtful if any man in our history has been made the victim and the beneficiary of such a series of grotesque fictions. Parson Weems (Mason Locke Weems) was a native of Virginia, was educated in England for the Church, and in 1784, there being no Bishop of the Church of England in America, he applied unsuccessfully to various English bishops for admission to holy orders. This and similar cases\* became an important factor in the establishment in the United States of the Episcopal Church, distinct in organization from the Church of England.

But great as Washington was, he was not so different from other men that it would be impossible for an ordinary human being to follow his example. Washington loses nothing by the thought that he was not perfect. Indeed he gains by it as an example, showing that he had obstacles within as well as without to overcome before he accomplished what he did, and that he won not so much by genius as by hard work and determination.

In this country good manners reached their culmination in the time of George Washington, whose stateliness and dignity made him easily the first gentleman of his day. In fact, these so far overshadowed his other qualities that we are only beginning to get acquainted with his human side. We know now that he had weaknesses even as ordinary mortals, and we have read that his bill for apple toddy was no small one. Some people have even hinted that he took too much at times; this, I, for one, would not admit. But

\*See Fiske's *Critical Period of American History*, page 83.

## LORD COLERIDGE

if he did actually succumb on some rare occasions, we may be sure he got loaded like a gentleman, and that the fuller he got the more stately and dignified he became.

George Washington was by descent an English country gentleman—he was the great-grandson of that John Washington, who being concerned in an attempt to overthrow Oliver Cromwell and to restore the old Stuart dynasty, was obliged to flee across the Atlantic to join other Royalist exiles in Virginia.

\* \* \* \*

Take also the case of Paul Jones, the sea fighter. It is charged today that one of the best-known histories of Jones is largely fiction, although it was accepted for a long time as containing principally facts. For a good deal of the romance which has been cast about the life of John Paul Jones, the novelist Cooper is responsible. Cooper was a marvelous romancer, with a good story and fascinating characters. He wrote "The Pilot," which is a great sea story, and Jones was its hero. It is perhaps hard to tell, even today, how much is true and how much is fiction in Cooper's tale, but he helped in the work of throwing mystery about the life of this fighter of the seas.

We do not know definitely if John Paul Jones deserves all of the credit which has been given him as a war hero. The life of the Scottish-American sailor has given rise to much controversy.

\* \* \* \*

Tucked away in the annals of the Navy Department at Washington is the history of the two-and-a-half years' war the United States waged against France

beginning in 1798. More than fifty sea fights, some of them as desperate as the American Navy ever fought, took place in the course of the hostilities. It was a war worthy of much historical notice, yet historians have neglected it as a war, presumably because it was “unofficial”—i. e., war was not formally declared. The Supreme Court defined it as a *partial war*. This definition is worthy of the Limerick Assizes. As early as 1790 French privateers began preying on American commerce. Protest was made, but France paid no attention to the representations of Mr. Edmund Randolph, then Secretary of State. American ships were seized, crews imprisoned and commerce destroyed. Finally the Government backed with force the protests of New England ship owners, and our history carries no more brilliant chapter than the narration of the exploits which followed. In 1801 negotiations were opened to end a war which had never officially begun. In the meantime 84 French fighting ships had been captured with the loss of only one American ship, although our loss in merchant marine was heavy. A number of French battle flags now hang in the Naval Museum at Annapolis.

It was during the controversy which preceded this war with France that the mythical phrase “millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute” is supposed to have been coined. The famous treaty made by John Jay with England threatened to involve the United States in war with France and the Directory would not receive the American Ambassador, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, but intimated to him that the payment of a certain sum might settle the dispute.

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Pinckney is supposed to have indignantly answered with the now historic phrase. It is said, however, that long afterward when Pinckney was asked in his club whether he had ever uttered it, he replied, "No, my answer was not a flourish like that, but simply, 'Not a penny, not a penny.' "

\* \* \* \*

And how many of us realize that the war of 1812 was brought about altogether by the scheming of the master mind of Napoleon. It was his policy to embroil the United States in war with England in order to keep England's navy busy. He used the two countries as pawns in his game of chess—and they fell for it. This was the most foolish war ever fought. On the United States side war was declared by Congress by a majority of one. At a naval dinner given in New York shortly after the signing of peace one of the speakers referring to the naval duel between H. M. S. *Boxer* and the U. S. S. *Enterprise* offered the toast, "The crew of the *Boxer*, enemies by law, but by gallantry brothers."

\* \* \* \*

Modern historians, notably John Fiske, have taken more precaution, but it will be many years before the chronicle of our early national life and achievements will have been authentically given. You cannot drink too deeply of Fiske's valuable books. This is a good opportunity to say to you re-read them. Carlyle speaks of a few books well read, and Thoreau somewhere said, "Read the best books first. You may not have time to read them all." It is a temperate statement to say that if you will read fifty good books and then

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read them again, it will do more for you in the way of culture and character than to read one hundred other books of equal value. The full greatness of such books as Fiske's will thus be better comprehended. My thought is don't grab a quick lunch out of a book. Take a full meal.

Never lose sight of the obligation a good book lays on you. No matter how great a book may be, it can only be great to you if there is some answering greatness in yourself. The eye may read the written pages, but the soul is not spoken to by the great and noble, unless that soul's effort is day by day toward greatness and nobleness.

Read only the best books, and never read bad books. Good books will nerve you for the work—the serious and earnest work—which is the lot of all good and true men; for, to quote a great writer, Dr. Young, not from his *Night Thoughts*, but from his *Satires* a work much less known:

“This is a scene of combat, not of rest;  
Man’s is laborious happiness at best;  
On this side death, his labors never cease;  
His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace.”

\* \* \* \*

It seems strange that no one has come forward with a national air all our own. Dr. Samuel Smith of Boston, a Baptist, while still a divinity student at Andover, wrote the words:

“My country ’tis of thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,” etc.,

adapting them to the air “God Save the King,” but he was possibly unaware of its origin. Both words and music of the latter were written by Henry Carey,

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and were first sung by him in public in 1740 at the celebration of a naval victory won by Admiral Vernon. It was in honor of this great sailor that the Washington home was named Mount Vernon, Lawrence Washington, who built it, the elder brother of George, having served in the British Navy under Vernon. The air of the "Star-Spangled Banner" is an Irish melody set by Tom Moore to the words "To Anacreon in Heaven."

Almost every nation of Europe has original and popular airs of its own. Hundreds could be found in Russia, Spain, Italy, Ireland and Scotland. Any of these could be cribbed and not recognized, and there are many that would serve as a national anthem better than the one so clearly belonging by every right to the British Empire. Undying fame awaits the man or woman who will offer such an air. It is many years since Howard Saxby remarked, "What an opportunity there is for some one to achieve everlasting fame and fortune by giving us an original national song."

This precious stanza in the British national anthem has always sounded very quaint in modern ears:

"Oh Lord our God, arise  
Scatter his enemies  
And make them fall.  
Confound their polities,  
Frustate their knavish tricks  
On Thee our hopes we fix,  
God save us all."

The rest is respectable even if pretty stodgy. Perhaps some grotesquerie in the rhyme of "icks" is responsible for the banality of the verse, but the final line is unquestionably grand, in its omnibus appeal:  
"God save us all!"

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It has been said that the verse is crude and perhaps somewhat unchristian. It has a curious parallel to its self-conscious outcry in the very differently phrased petition of the New Hampshire farmer who prayed so fervently: "O Lord bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife; us four and no more."

The same thing is true of college songs. Harvard has taken Tom Moore's "*Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms*" and utilized it in "*Fair Harrard.*" West Point has taken captive "*Irish Molly O'*" and made her reappear in "*Benny Havens O.*"\*

\* \* \* \*

And oddly enough there is no national holiday in the United States. The Fourth of July, New Year's Day, Labor Day and Thanksgiving Day† are observed in all the States, but they are not legal holidays in the sense that any action of the National Congress has so created them. These days are observed as holidays merely by common consent and custom.

In the same way we have no national flower. We hear of goldenrod and the pansy but neither has any official sanction. A bill to name the pansy the national flower of the country has been presented to Congress but has never received final action. Most of the States have flowers, chosen either by the Legislatures or by vote of the public school children of the State.

\* \* \* \*

Many of the States of the Union have adopted designations all their own. Everyone knows that

\*Benny Havens was a bar-tender in a tavern near West Point, much frequented by cadets many years ago.

†Thanksgiving day was first set apart by the Plymouth Pilgrims in 1621 in acknowledgment of their first harvest in America.

“Hoosier” means Indiana, “Kurnell” Kentucky, “Key-stone” Pennsylvania, “Buckeye” Ohio, “Cracker” Georgia and so on, but there is no designation, either in the form of a nickname or otherwise, applicable to a citizen of the United States less comprehensive than the term *American*. Yankee is very limited in scope. American covers everything on this Western Hemisphere from the extreme North to Cape Horn. A Patagonian, a Cuban, a Greenlander, can each call himself an American, but neither can make a specific claim like Saint Paul when he said “I am a Roman.”\* The citizen of the United States can apply to himself no designation similarly exact and specific. Here is an opportunity for some genius to coin a word. My own thought is that all the other fellows ought to change and leave us in peaceful possession of *America* and *Americans*. But if they will not listen to reason and accept such a simple solution, and our people must still have a distinctive name how would Usitania sound to you? Unfortunately the word contains two more letters, but Usitanians would follow nicely.

But be all these things as they may, I must return to my muttons and say that I cannot feel in sympathy with the modern scholars who are turning the fierce searchlights of modern scientific biography on the Fathers of our country. You read them with a sense of shock. We can even part with the snake of Eden without a pang. We can let the whale sink and Jonah with him, but there are two old wood-cuts, one of them Robinson Crusoe, and the other that little boy with a hatchet in his hand consecrated in my earliest memory, and while I know the cherry tree story is all bosh, I

\*Civis Romanus sum.

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somehow want to keep right on in the faith, and as I write under the shadow of a picture of the Father of his Country, I feel that to doubt it is almost like challenging the validity of the Scriptures.

NOTE: You may remark in these letters the frequent use of the word *English* instead of the more pedantic and less beautiful word *British*. *Britisher* is a most objectionable word, rarely used in the United States in a cordial sense. I use the term *English* as Campbell writes, "*Ye Mariners of England*," and ardent Scot as he was, we may be sure he included the sailormen of Scotland, Ireland, Wales and Nova Scotia. Carlyle uses *England* and *English* and no one accuses him of being inaccurate. In any case I am not in bad company.

## LETTER XI

### OHIO

AND before we get too far away from the subject of History let us hope you are familiar with the history of Ohio—your native State. It has been said that some men are born great, some have greatness thrust upon them, and some are born in Ohio. It is a close second to Virginia as a mother of Presidents, and oddly enough, unlike most States it has had several different capitals during its career. The intelligent study of our history is largely an attempt to understand that peculiar genius which has characterized the men who have chiefly contributed to our present development. Without such understanding the mere facts of history mean little; we see the events, but not their causes or their true significance.

\* \* \* \*

In 1786 the second Ohio Company was formed with a view to founding a new State between Lake Erie and the Ohio River. It was composed chiefly of New England officers and soldiers, was organized in Boston, and Rufus Putnam was its leader.

\* \* \* \*

The famous Northwest Ordinance was passed by Congress in 1787. It provided a temporary govern-

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ment for the Territory with the understanding that as soon as the population was sufficient, the representative system should be adopted. The third article provided that: "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government, and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

\* \* \* \*

It is worthy of note that in this third article Ohio set a precedent, for nothing is said of education in the Constitution. In fact, education as a national unifying agency did not lie within the field of view of the framers of the Constitution. It has, therefore, remained for each State to deal with education as it might choose without suggestion or oversight from the national government. Our State universities are doing an important work. Their dominating spirit is to inspire the student to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, and it is well; but what of the stimulus to conceive an ideal of character and conduct? The college which gives its students a conception of a well-ordered life, which inspires them to strive for self-regulation and proper self-development must thereby benefit the whole community. It is more urgent that they be successes as men than as engineers or lawyers. If the historian Lecky is correct in claiming that the essential qualities of national greatness are moral, not material, then moral training must be the most important element in education.

\* \* \* \*

It is not less worthy of note that it occurred to Nathan Dane, who drafted the ordinance, which was

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passed by the Continental Congress on July 13, 1787, to insert a clause by which slavery was forever excluded from the States north of the Ohio River. The ordinance also included a prohibitory clause against all laws impairing the obligation of contracts, which was made a part of the Constitution of the United States a few months later.

"We are accustomed to praise the lawgivers of antiquity," Daniel Webster said. "We help to perpetuate the name of Solon and Lycurgus, but I doubt whether one single law of any lawgiver, ancient or modern, has produced effects of a more distinct and marked lasting character than the ordinance of 1787."

Mr. Webster's reference of course is to the fact that Mr. Dane drafted the ordinance, and that it was adopted without a single alteration.

The Ohio Company founded Marietta at the mouth of the Muskingum River in 1788, and this is considered the oldest permanent settlement, and has been referred to as the birthplace of the State.

\* \* \* \*

General Arthur St. Clair, who was the first territorial Governor, lies in an abandoned burying ground in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, Pa. The grave was unmarked until quite recently when the masonic body in the county raised a monument, which bears the following inscription: "This monument was built by the Freemasons of Westmoreland County to the memory of General Arthur St. Clair in lieu of a better one which is due from his adopted country."

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Ohio was the pioneer State of the Old Northwest Territory and its first capital was Chillicothe which is a beautiful and historic old town near the mouth of the Scioto River. It was settled in 1796 by pioneers from Kentucky and Virginia who left their homes in the South, it is claimed, on account of their convictions on the subject of slavery, and when Ohio came into the Union in 1803 this settlement was made the first Capital of the young State.

\* \* \* \*

Ohio, as you know, was never formally admitted to the Union, but the organization of a State Government took place with the meeting of the first general Assembly in Chillicothe. The Governor, Edward Tiffin, an Englishman by birth, and State officers were elected, and United States Senators were *appointed*.

The Senators were Thomas Worthington and John Smith, the latter a merchant in Cincinnati. In the employ of Smith at this time was a young man, a native of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This youth was the son of Scottish parents, and his name was Charles McMicken. He died in 1858, and bequeathed to the city of Cincinnati an endowment for the purpose of higher education, and this was the foundation of the University of Cincinnati.

\* \* \* \*

McMicken knew but little of art and had made no discovery in science, and yet he gave great acquisitions of wealth to the advancement of knowledge, and the cultivation of liberal pursuits. He was for Cincinnati what the Medici were for Florence; they ennobled

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trade by making it the ally of philosophy, of eloquence, and of taste, and wealth was made to give a splendid patronage to learning.

\* \* \* \*

Chillicothe remained the Capital for seven years, and when the centennial of the State was celebrated in 1903, tablets were erected to mark the site of the first public structure built of stone in the Northwest Territory, the old State House, where the original Constitution of Ohio was adopted.

\* \* \* \*

After a few years there was a movement to have the State Capital located further north, and for a brief time, Zanesville (so named for its founder, Ebenezer Zane,) situated at a point where the Licking and the Muskingum Rivers join, was the seat of government. The Legislature met there for two sessions, 1810 and 1811. In the hope of becoming the permanent Capital, the City of Zanesville erected a State House, but was thrifty enough to arrange the building so that it could be used as a court house and county headquarters in case the seat of government should be transferred again. The old brick building, which it was hoped would become the Ohio State House, was used for county purposes along into the late seventies.

\* \* \* \*

About 1810, Dublin, Franklin County, possibly inspired by its name, became ambitious to become the Capital, but did not succeed. Columbus, about 16 miles from Dublin, was chosen instead through the enterprising holders of land who offered the State the site for a capitol, penitentiary and other public build-

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ings. An additional claim was that it was situated in the geographical center of the State, and around the Capital, so located, has grown the now prosperous and beautiful city of Columbus.

It is curious to note that Columbus gave the State two separate batches of land of ten acres each—one lot for the State House and one lot for the penitentiary—the foresighted and impartial founders of the Capital realizing that equal and immediate quarters should be provided alike for the lawmakers and the law-breakers, but they little realized how narrow the dividing line between them was destined to become. On St. Valentine's day, 1812, the Legislature, then at Zanesville, accepted the proposition. On the 18th of June following, the same day Congress declared war on Great Britain, Columbus, the site of which was then an unbroken forest, was laid out, and the primeval wilderness and native untrodden soil awoke to its initial real estate boom.

\* \* \* \*

Columbus was our home for a time a good many years ago and before you checked in and came to board with us.

\* \* \* \*

The present Ohio State Capitol was built in 1839 to replace the first primitive structure, and stands upon the identical ten acres of land given for its site by the enterprising citizens of Franklin County in 1812. For many years it was called the grandest State House in the United States. It is a severe, massive pile, though neither magnificent nor beautiful. Within its grounds there stands the monument erected to the

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famous Civil War heroes of Ohio—Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Hayes, Garfield and Stanton. Their bronze statues surround the monument and above them is the inscription: “These are my jewels.”

## LETTER XII

### OHIO

(Continued)

**I**N his *Winning of the West* ex-President Roosevelt touches only lightly on the making of Ohio and declares that the "Ohioans adopted a very foolish Constitution." There are those who think that some very foolish amendments were made to this document as a result of the Constitutional Convention of 1912. As a matter of fact, no change in the mere mechanism of elections can suffice to strengthen the morale of the electorate. Where the voters are indifferent and careless, evil results are inevitable no matter on what plan elections are conducted. Where the voters are alive to their own interests and are disposed to assert themselves as conscience dictates, the ballot under any regulations is sure to be an effective weapon. The assumption that an impaired standard of civic responsibility can be remedied by an act of the Legislature is a fallacy and this Ohio will sooner or later discover. Responsibility for evil rests upon the voters and no permanent improvement can come until the great mass of voters demand it.

Then again, the recall of judges is demoralizing to competent public servants, because it is trial by popular clamor with the verdict found by vote in a mass-meeting. Justice was never done in that way and

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never can be so done. Nothing can be more dangerous than the movement to subject judges to recall by a popular vote. No graver subject has ever confronted the American people. You remember that a judge like Jeffreys could dispense injustice as the servile tool of a king. Under the recall with us the king would be an excitable public, but the judges would be rendered equally servile. The only safeguard to the rights and liberties of minorities and individuals, of the weak, and especially of the unpopular, would be swept away. Senator Lodge remarks that "the compulsory initiative and referendum is nothing in the world but a device to permit interested and organized minorities to govern."

\* \* \* \*

Ohio is a great industrial commonwealth, and under its amended Constitution all the relations between employers and employees will be supervised by a commission of three men, politically appointed. These men will have the right to order any life-protective device they choose to order, not merely for factories, but for telegraph and telephone concerns, hotels, apartment houses and stores. They will also be vested with the regulation of the hours of labor, and their orders will be reviewable only by the Supreme Court of the State. That is, the Legislature strips itself of its own function. Without appeal and without amendment, statutes for the protection of "the lives, health, comfort, or general welfare of employees" may be so metamorphosed by an administrative board as to become new and different acts, remote from the intention of the Legislature. The Constitution is to make for certain purposes a little Legislature with the power

to add to, subtract from and miscellaneous confuse and bedevil existing laws as to the welfare of employees. That there is real peril in all such delegation of legislative powers is a growing sentiment among students of constitutional law.

Under her new Constitution Ohio's Legislature may fix a minimum wage in any industry or in all industries. This has not been delegated to a commission. But the authority of the Labor Commission as it stands is so great that in any State *except Ohio*, the nature of politicians being well understood, there would be grave fear of such wholesale grafting as would compel a change of system. Most States cannot find angels for membership on State Commissions.

But waiving the fear of corruption, Ohio's industries face the menace of ill-considered interference at every point. Can they stand this, and keep their place in the competitive markets of the United States? If they cannot, the experiment in paternalism will result only in driving many of these industries to other States. This is one country. Competition demands like wage conditions. And if interference with hours and wages destroys the value of plants by compelling removal it is entirely possible that the victims will appeal to the Federal Courts to step in and prevent the taking of property without due process of law.

Ohio has made her bed and must lie in it. Unless I am mistaken she will be so uncomfortable before the dark night of industrial unsettlement is over that other commonwealths will not be anxious to follow her example in bed making.

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Thoughtful men are asking whether the changes or reforms which so many people seem to consider necessary require the abandonment of blessings which Americans have enjoyed so long that they have forgotten, indeed many have never learned how painfully the fathers secured them. The principles of our Constitution have passed without question so long that many of us have forgotten the reasons that underlie them. Now even the principles are questioned.

Headlong reformers are nearly always unpractical. It is never well that the first momentary impulse of the public mind should become law. In Ohio instead of going to work quietly and gradually to remove corruption and self-seeking by the only rational and possible method—the training of an intelligent and honest electorate, they rush headlong to destroy representative government by committing all powers, without limit or restraint, to voters who have shown themselves incompetent or unwilling to use properly what they already possess. Self-control rather than public control is the power on which we must rely for achieving the greatest results; the slow influence of example rather than the quick compulsion of law, is the means by which the real regeneration of society is achieved.

Not only so, but it is seriously proposed that the Legislature be abolished as useless and all power centered in the commission. The next step will be one-man rule, and to that pure Democracy always has led and probably always will lead. Representative government with a fixed constitution is the only form under which liberty and individual rights have ever

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been secure, and when it is destroyed they will go with it, and first Socialism, then despotism takes its place.

The Constitution is the permanent will of the people; a law is but the temporary act of their representatives who have only such power as the people choose to give them. When the people of a State, or the United States, come together and make a constitution they are doing the highest political act; and they themselves are the highest political power\* known to free Anglo-Saxon people. Legislatures are but a small representative committee and are of comparatively recent origin. Almost down to the Norman conquest, the whole body of the Anglo-Saxon people made their law—the Normans called it the Great Council of the Realm. In theory every freeman was supposed to go to these councils. It is on record that at one of them held on Salisbury Plain, about a hundred years before the Conquest, there were sixty thousand voters present. This was “direct legislation by the people” of which we hear so much today as if it were something new. But for convenience they got into the way of choosing a smaller number of men to represent them. The very fact of impracticability suggested the idea of representatives. This is called the great invention which the English people have given to the world’s science of government. The first Scottish Parliament met in the town of Lanark A. D. 978.

Representative government is, therefore, one of the achievements of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, but it is threatened by the initiative and referendum. They substitute direct legislation, a method of government, as we see, tried and abandoned centuries ago.

\**Salus publica suprema lex.*

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Upon simple questions admitting of a direct yes or no—such as the assumption of a debt, or the location of a capital or the prohibition of the sale of liquors—the direct method of asking the people themselves to legislate is reasonable. But when the question is not what things shall be done, but *how* they shall be done, involving intricate details and the consideration of many factors, the consultation of the electorate is not a reasonable procedure. This thought also applies to tariff legislation. For such deliberations the action of a few brains is better suited than that of many. Hence trial by jury, rather than by the voice of the populace which is not always the voice of God. When the people assume to legislate they dethrone their representative Legislatures and impose upon themselves duties far more difficult than those for which they have proved themselves incompetent. An electorate which fails to choose fit representative legislators is more unfit to legislate itself. Liberty can not be preserved by setting up a power above the Constitution. An unrestrained popular mandate would be as unendurable as the reign of an absolute monarch.

It is the peculiar glory of Anglo-Saxon governments that they start with the inalienable rights of individual citizens. Such governments exist for the citizens, not the citizens for the governments. Rights to life, liberty and happiness precede government and are not conferred by governments. Other governments regard their subjects as existing for the State and as bound to its service. Our government regards itself as existing for the people. It is for this reason that the people living under Anglo-Saxon forms of government imposed

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limitations upon their government, which limitations some now thoughtlessly seek to sweep away. Our Constitution imposes limitations upon the sovereign people because the natural rights of individuals are superior to the political rights of government. The Constitution is a declaration both as to what government may and may not do. It is a declaration that no official has any power over the individual except as the aggregate of individuals have agreed. There is no officer so high that he has any other power over the humblest citizen than he has over the mightiest in wealth or intellect. Before the Constitution all are equal.

\* \* \* \*

Liberty is the assurance that every man shall be protected in doing what he believes his duty against influence of authority and majorities and customs and opinions. Individual liberty is the cornerstone of the free state, and the assurances of Magna Charta were given seven hundred years ago to free men of England and their heirs forever. We are direct heirs of that noble inheritance and the most wonderful thing about it is that it was not a gift or privilege. That instrument which the Barons compelled King John to sign contained no rhetoric. It did not philosophize, it was a plain, practical assertion of common rights fitted to the use of the people of that day.

\* \* \* \*

The soul and substance of our Constitution consists in freedom for independent action of the individual, freedom to do what he wills with his strength, his time, his property, up to the point where his use of

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such possessions become an injury to other citizens of their strength, their time, and their property, and with every enlargement of the functions and powers of government we change from freedom towards loss of freedom—we abridge the individual power of independent action.

Prof. Stimson of Harvard University says, “It is the States, the people, that make the Nation, not the Nation the States. It is elementary that the Federal Government had no power to delegate anything. It would be like the creature endowing the creator. It is the States—the people—that have created the Federal Government, and the Federal Government is there only to obey their behest. A sovereign may make a grant to his people, but a government of limited powers may not endow with any rights the people of whom it is but the servant.”

\* \* \* \*

The notion of equality was, as you know, very strong at the time of the Revolution; and in an extreme democracy it is apt to be valued more than even the right to liberty itself. In other words, democracies and legislatures representing them will sacrifice individual rights, and impose very tyrannous laws in the aim of securing a fancied equality. It has been suggested that perhaps we made a great mistake more than a hundred years ago, in echoing so vigorously the French demand for human rights, instead of the English demand for *human duty*. We have kept on with it ever since; there is loud shouting in the highways and byways about our rights. We are bewildered, and between the clashing political and social theories the

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average man scarcely knows how to think and to act. We veer and shift too readily.

We are moving rapidly in these days of newly awakened social and political consciousness, but it is wildly improbable that we will ever be willing to destroy the supreme device that has made our government a system of checks and balances—viz. the three independent and co-ordinate departments, legislative, executive and judicial—and leave ourselves, as the historian Macaulay said, “all sail and no anchor.” The theory of the separation of powers holds a prominent place in English and American political philosophy. That legislative, judicial and executive functions should be carefully distinguished and entrusted to agents quite independent of each other has been more or less the aim of our constitution-makers, and has been generally approved by thinkers and writers upon our political institutions. This idea is by no means a new thing. It was perfectly known to the hard, practical common sense of the Republic of Rome, and its fullest exposition may be read in the philosophical annals of Polybius. The Romans had a genius for governing which has probably never yet been equalled by any other people.

\* \* \* \*

Self-restraint is of the essence of good government, and lack of it has overthrown governments threatened as now is ours. All experience shows that if self-restraint is to be exercised, it cannot be trusted to be done in the time of temptation. The self-restraint to be effective must be imposed in times of calmness and enforced strictly. The law is more important than

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the official, and no official is fit to be entrusted with discretion above the law. The people themselves are not fit to be entrusted with that uncontrolled power of which they have wisely divested themselves in their supreme mandate as binding upon themselves, as upon their officials and upon all citizens. The moment that officials or people are placed above the law the law suffers in authority, and individual liberty is unsafe. This applies to the relations between states and nations, as well as to the relation between each citizen and all citizens in the aggregate, or any or all officials. These are the questions which were involved in our Civil War, and which now are pending in a bloodless but not less serious revolution, proceeding, all unobserved, under cover of assumption of superior excellence of motive and intention.

The removal of the Constitutional check upon the sovereignty of the majority is a temptation to anarchy or despotism. If votes can overrule constitutions and laws, the essential principles of our Government disappear. When the people judge and legislate, the distribution of our Government into independent departments vanishes, and with it a safeguard of liberty. There is no possibility of making the popular mandate available *only* for good purposes. It must be unlimited sovereignty of the electorate, or it must remain a limited power of all over the individual as now. Democratic absolutism is just as repulsive, just as fatal to individualism as monarchical absolutism. And yet Legislatures exhaust their ingenuity in evading the Constitution, a sure proof that workers upon popular appetites would imitate the Legislature. We must

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adapt our institutions to alterations in conditions, and the Constitution itself provides the sufficient method of adaptation. When the American people shall adopt unconstitutional methods they will have taken the first step away from their traditions of safety, glory, and prosperity surpassing all that the world has witnessed to this time.

\* \* \* \*

But it is not for us to question motives, mistaken as we believe some of their manifestations to be. We must recognize in it all a desire for better things, for ameliorated conditions and wider opportunities for all, for prompter, more impartial justice, for more joy and beauty in life, and for freedom from the distress of poverty and want that underlies the unrest and dissatisfaction which have been, and still are so much in evidence.

If we all do our part we can make the wilderness blossom like the rose, and the barren places of the land white with waving harvests of well being and content. Let us not, however, be deluded into thinking as many emotional and well-meaning people are trying to persuade us that such changes can be brought about by legislation or demagogic talk and promises. They will come with painstaking endeavor—endeavor on the part of every one to raise the standards of his own character, and with the best possible provision for the nurture and instruction of the young.

\* \* \* \*

The forefathers took infinite care to lay a broad and solid foundation for our national life and conduct. They set forth in remarkably clear vision their views in that great document called the Constitution.

## OHIO

There are probably thousands, and tens of thousands of citizens enjoying the privilege of the vote, who have never read the Constitution of the United States. It is a comparatively brief document, simply written and inclusive of all phases of our national life. These qualities should recommend its careful perusal to every man. To know its contents will acquaint him with the realities of our form of government and lift his mind above the petty squabbles of small affairs.

It shows in its broad view of national requirements that any elective office is exalted; that public service is the highest type of work to which a man can put his mind; that an office is not merely a job with a salary attached, but a public trust with a responsibility attached.

Reading the Constitution carefully we find it full of the dignity of government. There is nothing in it about public office and private benefit. The one thing is the supremacy of government, clean of character, efficient of purpose.

It serves two purposes:—

First: It is a rule and guide for the definite administration of public affairs.

Second: It is equally a rule and guide to the humblest voter in inspiring him to keep clean and adequate public service in mind every time he votes.

For these reasons, if for no other, every man should familiarize himself with the Constitution of the United States.

Since 1804 it has remained unchanged until now, save for the three amendments which were the result of the mighty Civil War.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Now, in a time of profound peace, in the midst of national prosperity, and without anger, the Constitution has been amended twice; and the result has been accepted with good temper and no great dissatisfaction by all classes and all parties.

This would indicate that the good sense and keen, quick, moral instincts of the nation are alive, and that our free, organic institutions still answer the purpose of the republic.

But we need more civic education, and no time or public money will be wasted in teaching right citizenship, if the effort is properly and persistently directed. Grown-up people are quite as much in need of instruction as are children, and the more so now that government is coming more directly into the hands of the people than it has ever been before.

Heretofore the people's rights have been limited, but direct primaries, the initiative and referendum in many States, in some States almost the power of direct legislation, and in some the right to turn out as well as to elect executive officers, legislators and even judges, all mean new responsibilities and privileges and necessitates a better acquaintance with the functions and powers of government than ever before. If people are to govern in this direct way they must know how, and something in the way of formal education in their responsibilities should be undertaken.

In a word we are being legislated to death. It does not seem to have gone home to the minds of our lawmakers that the greatest problems the country has to face are *problems of business and not of politics*. There is now an entirely new kind of training demanded of congressmen and members of legislatures.

## OHIO

In the Continental Congress it was a question of government and of political disputes. The early statesmen of the United States were masters in state-craft. Of great business and trade problems there were none.

At the present day laws governing our banks, our railroads, our internal and international trade eclipse into complete darkness all other laws that are made. They demand a new type of statesmanship. They call for men who have a wide knowledge of trade and financial affairs. The unfortunate thing is that men of this type are usually slow to offer themselves for public office.

\* \* \* \*

And it is well to consider whether any man has a right to enjoy all the benefits of government and criticise its conditions and not contribute any of his thought or his time or his example to its maintenance in its best form. The older generations studied government as an art and took a large part in its affairs, and oddly enough they did so without serious reflection on their personality or their professional calling. The almost total neglect of this question by most of our best—our otherwise very best class of citizens in this generation cannot be regarded as other than a dangerous and unfortunate infirmity in our body politic. As a matter of fact many of our best men shrink from contamination.

\* \* \* \*

We boast of a progressive country, but when men are satisfied to lean upon the Government instead of supporting it, the nation is not progressing, but it is retrogressing. A nation is no stronger, better or purer

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than its people. Governmental improvement is simply a corollary to individual improvement. It was a sense of personal responsibility and individual independence that conceived governmental independence and won it in America, and it is that spirit alone which will preserve it. A policy of paternalism in government is not keeping faith with that pioneer spirit. It is certain death to manhood and good citizenship to lead men away from personal responsibility and self-reliance into the delusion of artificial standards.

\* \* \* \*

The idea that human beings or human society will become perfect if we pass laws enough, is based on a wholly false philosophy. The ultimate outstanding cure for social unrighteousness is individual righteousness, and not the enactment of statutes. When people get down to calm, dispassionate reasoning they must admit this proposition. Society is purified exactly in the proportion in which the individual is purified, and the individual may go on in his impurity and continue his ostrich act of trying to hide his head under a mountain of new laws as long as he pleases, without changing the moral tone of society except in accordance with this principle.

## LETTER XIII

OHIO

(Continued)

O HIO has furnished six Presidents for the United States, five of whom had served in the Civil War, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Harrison and McKinley, all of whom I have seen and known, except Garfield. Mr. McKinley honored me with a personal acquaintance, and both he and Mrs. McKinley were always most gracious to you as a little boy, and indeed to all of us.

Mr. McKinley's brother Abner, a member of the New York Bar, had a summer home at Somerset, Pennsylvania, and it seemed to be a great relaxation to the President to spend a few days there, and he did so as frequently as the cares and duties of State would admit. The first time I saw him after his inauguration was on one of these visits. His quiet, simple bearing had not changed. I met the party at Cumberland and went with them to Somerset. After a little he nodded and said, "let us go forward and smoke a cigar." We had scarcely lit up when he asked, "When were you in Cincinnati?" "Oh, not since election day. I couldn't vote in Maryland, so I went back and voted in Ohio." Then he said, "When did you see Tom McDougal?" I said I had seen him in New York

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shortly before. This enquiry interested me. McDougal was one of the strong Cincinnati lawyers of that day, and he and the Major had long been close friends. When he was involved financially some years before, McDougal instantly went to the rescue putting his entire resources at Mr. McKinley's immediate command, as a very close and warm friendship existed between them. Others promptly came to the front, and I believe that the late Mr. Mark Hanna and Mr. P. C. Knox largely aided in tiding Mr. McKinley over his temporary financial embarrassment.

\* \* \* \*

McDougal was the inevitable Scotchman, and the box of Scotchmen he imported to Cincinnati could only be compared to that of Irishmen transplanted by the late Mr. Harry Oliver (a prince of men) to Pittsburgh.

McDougal had been a mechanic in his early days, studied law betimes, and at the time of his death was probably the most forceful personality at the Cincinnati Bar. He deserved his success. He crossed the wild and raging Atlantic Ocean at the risk of his life for the benefit of Cincinnati in particular, and these United States in general. It was said that he declined political preferment in any form at Mr. McKinley's hands—for himself.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Oliver told me an amusing story which is well worth repeating. His son-in-law, Mr. Harry Rea, lived near him in Sewickley and maintained a very handsome place. Mr. Oliver, walking along past another neighbor's place and seeing the gardener busy

## OHIO

in front, stopped and cheerily greeted the man, and approvingly commented on the nice appearance of things. The gardener, a typical north country Irishman, looked up and said "Good morning. Are you the mon that works for Rea?"

He was.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. McKinley enjoyed their quiet visits to Somerset. He was very fond of flowers and seemed to derive endless pleasure from the garden attached to his brother's place. He always wore a pink or white carnation and one day he took the flower from his lapel and pinned it with his own fingers on your little sailor jacket, and that flower was pressed and is still preserved in one of the old scrap-books. Mrs. McKinley spoke of her husband as "the Major," and she always called you her "little Buckeye boy."

\* \* \* \*

Mr. McKinley had an unusual capacity for companionship which conciliated affection and disarmed enmity. He had a marvellous way of dealing with people and his friends thought much of him. He could move among a crowd of men and make everyone feel well treated whether he did anything for him or not. This is a God-given gift, yet many men whom God must have entirely overlooked attempt to exercise it, and, what is worse, believe they get away with it. The attempt is known by many names. I have known many disastrous failures. Mr. McKinley never told any one that rain and sweat were the same thing. Sincerity and steadfastness were his dominant traits and he labored with a single mind for the best interests of

## LETTERS TO MY SON

his countrymen. He successfully guided the country through a critical period in its history. His being cut off in his prime and at the height of his usefulness was little short of a calamity to the American people, and it seems to me that we have never been in a state of mental balance since. We appeared to lose our national equilibrium and we have never recovered it. Up to that period I thought I understood the United States, but today one seems to understand nothing.

\* \* \* \*

Speaking of Buckeye, how many people know or ever think why Ohio is called the Buckeye State, or what a buckeye is anyhow? The buckeye is a variety of horse chestnut tree which thrives in that part of the country and the name was applied to the State soon after it came into the Union. The word Ohio is itself translated from the Indian as the "beautiful river." On the early French maps, for the French explored this whole region long in advance of the English, the Ohio River is designated "La Belle Riviere."

Audubon, the American naturalist, gives an interesting account of his descent of the Ohio River in the autumn of 1810. What he describes makes good reading, as a comparison between that which Audubon found and the highly settled and cultivated state of the Ohio valley today. He particularly refers to the "clear stream."

The more practical and commonplace English settler adopted the Indian name first for the river and then for the State, as a matter of convenience. With true Yankee propensity for nicknames, however, they seized upon the prevalence of the buckeye tree to

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designate their State and took pride in calling themselves “Buckeye boys.”

This was a highly appropriate selection, for the buckeye tree is found largely in the State and the district immediately surrounding it. The wood is soft fibre, but is difficult to burn, and it is said in Ohio that five sticks of any other kind of timber are required to consume one of buckeye. The early settlers found it extremely useful, however, in building their log houses and barns and fences, and through their utilization of it for these purposes they came to regard it with pride as the emblem of the State.

\* \* \* \*

The earliest settlement of Cincinnati, where you first saw the light, dates from December, 1788, and in 1790 General Arthur St. Clair (before referred to, and to whom you are remotely related,) arrived there to organize the county of Hamilton. It was the second county established in the Northwestern Territory, the first being Washington. The choice of the name of Hamilton, that great Scottish-American soldier and statesman, was a happy and fitting one—the man upon whom Washington records he could “always lean.”

\* \* \* \*

One of Cincinnati’s famous sons was Don Piatt, soldier, lawyer and journalist. In his journalistic work he displayed a genius for the invention of epithets. He introduced the word “crank” as at present used, and the expression “twisting the lion’s tail.”\* To the Senate he applied the phrase “fog bank,” and to the House “cave of the winds.” The Democratic

\*Happily forgotten.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

party he styled "the organized ignorance of the country",\* and the Republican "the organized greed of the country." It was Don Piatt who dubbed Mr. Murat Halstead the "Field Marshall," and General Benjamin F. Butler the "cock-eyed son of Destiny," and he has been given credit for coining the phrase, also now happily forgotten, "waving the bloody shirt."

\* \* \* \*

Another of my Ohio friends, who long since filled his mortal limit, was Colonel S. K. Donavin of Columbus, a veteran journalist, lecturer and politician. He was a forceful writer and a man of fine literary taste.

He lived in Baltimore before the Civil War and was on the staff of the *Baltimore American*, which made a brave fight against the Baltimore plug-uglies, the red-haired toughs who drugged Edgar Allan Poe and voted him, unconscious as he was of what was going on at election place after election place, and finally left him to die in a cellar. The Colonel's paper made the gamest fight against odds that was ever made. Again and again Donavin, then a stripling, was assaulted on the streets. But the stripling made such a reputation for himself in these street encounters that it was a common saying in Baltimore, "that when Sim Donavin pulled his knife from his boot the streets were cleared."

Representing the *American* he was an eye-witness of the stirring scenes at Harper's Ferry and was present when John Brown was hanged. His lecture on this subject was graphic and powerful.

He was an intimate friend of Samuel J. Tilden, and during the latter's Presidential campaign in 1876 was

\*Long before this Benjamin Disraeli said, "A conservative government is an organized hypocrisy."

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frequently sent on missions of the utmost importance by Mr. Tilden and his campaign managers.

In the rush and crush of this busy world, when sentiment is crowded to the rear by the practical affairs of life, and when the quick are too much absorbed in the struggle for wealth and fame, or too much occupied with their own joys and sorrows even to sigh for the almost countless men and women who are daily sinking to mysterious repose, there are few whose passing commands more than momentary grief. But my memory of Colonel Donavin is a very deep impression.

He was a man of brain and heart, and with a mental and moral equipment that entitled him to a much greater measure of what is usually called success than he attained. He had deep convictions and was conscientious in whatever he undertook. His writing was in good literary style, and was forceful and uncompromising. He cared more for the truth than he did for the material rewards of public service. His personal character commended him universally. He was widely appreciated for his high quality as a gentleman, as well as the fact that he was a most interesting man. He had a great store of knowledge and a faculty of communicating it to others, and it must ever remain a matter of great regret that he did not put his papers, and his many contributions in the form of public addresses, and newspaper and magazine articles into some sort of permanent form during his life. They would have thrown many illuminating side-lights on the record of a deeply interesting period of our history.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

Colonel Donavin knew Edgar Allan Poe and considered him the most interesting figure in American literature, and I have never heard his estimate disputed. If there was another just like Poe it would be difficult to place him. This wonderful man died at the age of forty, worn out, not by his "dissipations," but by the world-friction for which he was unprepared. But brief and troubled as his life was, it was not snuffed out before he had given us the "Raven," the "Bells" and "Annabel Lee," three remarkable productions of the human mind. The popularity of the "Raven" is world-wide and justly so. The poet loses his early love Lenore (innocence) and is visited by a raven (remorse). In other words the "Raven" is the story of the tragedy of a soul seeking to allay its immortal thirst for truth and beauty, and failing at last in the shadow of disappointment and sorrow.

\* \* \* \*

In his *Reminiscences of the Civil War by a Confederate Staff-Officer*, my old friend Major A. R. H. Ranson,\* tells the story of John Brown's raid of which he was an eye-witness, in the most clear and dispassionate manner, and I am quite sure that it would have been a great source of gratification to Colonel Donavin, had he lived, to read a corroboration of his views as to the utter folly of Brown's attempt, by so accurate an observer and so high a military authority as Major Ranson.

\* \* \* \*

One of my old associates, Mr. C. E. Ways,† Assistant Freight Traffic Manager of the *Baltimore & Ohio*

\*Major Ranson served for three years on the staff of General Robert E. Lee, and was present at the surrender at Appomattox. See Letter XXIII.

†Obit 1914.

## OHIO

R. R., was telegraph operator at Harper's Ferry at the time of the John Brown raid in 1860, and in that capacity sent the first news of it to Washington and the rest of the country.

\* \* \* \*

I might go on indefinitely about old Ohio friends, but will only name one more of whom I saw a great deal—General J. Warren Kiefer of Springfield, Ohio, a distinguished Representative and Speaker of the House of Representatives. He kept up the rather unusual custom, and does to this day, of wearing on all occasions, summer and winter, a dress suit, and he never condescended to an overcoat, no matter how bitter the weather. It is recorded that Mr. Gladstone cited in the House of Commons one of General Kiefer's parliamentary decisions and that it was adopted. This rule has since been called by the general name of *closure*, which is the right of a Speaker to close debate and cut off purposely obstructive motions and questions and bring the house to an immediate vote upon the main question.

\* \* \* \*

I was living in Cincinnati during the great floods of 1883, and also during the Court House riots the year following in which sixty-five people were killed, and I happened to see all I needed of both.

## LETTER XIV

PROFESSOR MCGUFFEY

I HAVE referred to the distorted history with which school books were filled. An outstanding exception was McGuffey's Fifth Reader, a work that molded the minds of a past generation. I speak of it not so much from experience as from the testimony of men who came under its influence, for example, men like Mr. John K. Cowen\* and Mr. F. D. Underwood,† both of whom I have heard speak of it with the deepest appreciation, almost veneration.

William Holmes McGuffey was for many years a Professor at Miami, and President of the University of Ohio, and was widely recognized as a great teacher of moral philosophy, but he also exercised unmeasurable influence in the field of literature.

Professor McGuffey was the author of a series of school readers which attained immense popularity, and for a long time were almost universally used in the public schools of the country.

These school readers, first published in Cincinnati, were largely instrumental in shaping the moral character and the literary taste of the youth of the land for two generations, and the length of time they resisted the competition of new wares seductively offered,

\*See Letters XXI and XXII.

†See Letters V and XXII.

testifies to their quality. Perhaps Noah Webster alone of all Americans, surpassed McGuffey in the extent and permanence of good wrought by him upon the human race. McGuffey's vast influence on the plastic minds of those who studied his readers can never be estimated.

It is interesting and instructive to scan these books and to note the kind of literature which was put into the hands of children of school age half a century ago. Take the Fifth Reader. The selections are from the best writers of English. The transcendent influence of McGuffey is discovered in the skill and taste with which he made choice of the matter for his Fifth Reader.

He struck the popular chord and therein we may measure accurately the feelings and sentiments of the people of about the middle of the Nineteenth century. The spirit of this Fifth Reader is the spirit of a sermon setting out the nobler outlines of Puritanical theology.

The selections are all remarkable for their literary excellence, but they are solemn, almost oppressively solemn, and reflect the austere religion of the people. The book strives frankly to inculcate the virtues of self-restraint, of heroism, of humility, of goodness of heart and of reverence for God and the Bible. The pupil is told to combat selfishness, arrogance and pride. Nearly every reading exercise has a moral explicitly stated.

Good, no doubt, will come out of the fierce light that has lately beaten upon modern educational methods and educational ideals, but with the gain there may have been a loss, and there would be a greater loss if we suffer ourselves to be distracted from attention to

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those simple qualities out of which the stuff of character can be woven. Moral character must be the basis of education. It is all very well to give the youth of the land good and simple lessons, but unless their lives are tightened up in other directions we are apt to find that the present generation will be less sturdy as compared to the generation from which they sprang.

\* \* \*

Are we not allowing progress in education to outrun itself? Variety and flexibility and all that makes for what we call character should not be sacrificed to a demand for a “national” system of education. No education is of true value that does not appeal to that element in life in which the higher interests of the intellect are supreme. It is written\* that man does not live by bread alone.

There is a mistaken notion that learning is wisdom. In reality common sense is the highest wisdom; and yet it is difficult to define, with anything like accuracy, the term common sense. But the fact remains that as we look about us in the world we can all recognize that there is a deplorable lack of common sense in much of humanity’s thoughts and actions.

Common sense is to some extent a gift, but it may be cultivated. One needs to study how to make himself adaptable to other people and to all situations—particularly to his own individual situation. It is also necessary to develop the sense of perception, and to push irrational flapdoodle into the background. Common sense is based on coolness, self-control and reason, but the last is most important. My whole

\*Deuteronomy, VIII: 3.

point is the apparent scarcity of that fundamental quality in these days. It seemed to be developed and grow naturally out of the type of education which was standard in the McGuffey era, and, if it must be said, it is too little found among the gumption-less youth of today.

Unquestionably education is far more widely diffused now than it was thirty or forty years ago; and for that reason boys ought to be better educated now than ever before. Probably in a way they are, but that does not change the fact that there must be some deficiency in a school training which lessens the ability as well as the inclination of men and women to do their work in the world. Education is not to be appraised by quantity; its value depends on the power it develops. The only safe foundation for a strong and prosperous national future is the progressive education of the youth of the present.

To be sure no reasonable person could expect our high schools to turn out boys who can run a foundry or a department store, but even the best friends of our high schools do censure their failure to give pupils the right attitude toward everyday life. The boys are not dolts. They simply are not taught to obey and to feel responsibility. They are made flabby by too lax discipline at school and too much coddling at home. Parents today admire their children more than they train them. It is often a sad sight in these days to see the old folk struggling by means of indulgence and admiration to keep the careless affection of their cocksure and superior offspring. It may be a sad truth, but pampering interferes with the proper development of character.

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Our public school system is one of the most vital portions of our national anatomy, and the complaint against it is general and well founded that as it stands we are failing to give the pupil a thorough knowledge of absolute essentials. Does it impress on him that the way his brain is trained and his character formed while he is at school will influence all his future success and the estimation of his fellows? Does it seek to impress on him that this is a hard, competitive world; that everybody, himself included, has got some talent that he must find and cultivate? It fails altogether, and this is even more true of college than school, to teach him that athletic success can never help him much, that the glory to be derived from it is largely fictitious and wholly transitory.

\* \* \*

It is notorious that many boys on leaving high school can neither write neatly, speak or spell correctly, nor cipher accurately; their English is slipshod and commonplace, because they do not know the sources and resources of their own language. Power over words cannot be had without some knowledge of the classics or much knowledge of the English Bible—but both are now quite out of fashion; they talk abstrusely and profusely about psychology, sociology and many other ologies, half of which they cannot spell. Their fathers may not have known quite as much about the ologies, but they probably talked them less and spelled them better.

\* \* \* \*

The personal habits of the rising generation are none too admirable, and they have little politeness

or respect for their elders. Usually the blame for this assumed deterioration of the boy is laid at the door of the school; it is held that the trouble is not so much with the boy himself as it is with the system under which he is educated. Our schools are also turning out a good many more who have been educationally demoralized by unearned promotions to grades which they have not been, and perhaps could not be prepared to enter. Whatever the reason may be, the amazing displays of ignorance and illiteracy given by otherwise splendid boys has given rise to the most savage arraignment of modern schools.

I am not bold enough to suggest a remedy for the condition which certainly does exist, but I do claim that there should be a frank recognition of the fact that the expectation of carrying every boy over the same broad and long educational course *at the same speed* is unfounded and fallacious. It cannot be done; we may pretend to do it and the consequences of pretense are lamentable and scandalous. The peril lies in the implication of intellectual equality which it fosters. Equality before the law is a sound and permanent democratic principle. Equality of personal capabilities is an absurd fallacy. Mythology tells us of the Procrustean bed, wherein men were tested and those whose feet protruded lost them by amputation, while those whose feet failed to touch the end of the bed were stretched until they did reach it. This made for uniformity and our modern educational system does not appear to have altogether survived it.

While teachers can keep their places only when they make way for new pupils by promoting the old

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ones, whether they ought to be promoted or not, the talk about the inefficiency of our schools of today will continue and will be justified. There can be no attempt at individual training, and the whole thing seems to be a system into which round boys, square boys, and triangular boys, and boys of no symmetrical figure must all fit or be damned. Our public schools will fail in one of their highest duties if they sacrifice the development of ability to a fetich of uniformity.

\* \* \* \*

The burden of the education of the youth of this country is a very heavy one, but it is cheerfully and willingly borne by the people of the United States in the hope and belief that the result will contribute to the creation of a nation which is homogeneous, and it must be recognized that our common schools have been a great unifying force in citizenship. They have opened the doors to a vast army of immigrants and introduced them to a common language and through it to a common citizenship.

\* \* \* \*

Then again, the members of our school boards are not commonly men of much education, or with much interest in education, or at least men of these qualifications are extremely unlikely to be in the majority. The quality of the schooling is in the hands of the local superintendent. If he be a man of force of character, he will "run the board." If his energy be greater than his circumspection, he may run it into strange courses. One educator of this class decided that the three R's were fads. If he prefers that his pupils expatriate and smatter, instead of concentrating

and learning something, expatriate and smatter they generally will. There is the temptation upon him to commend himself to the members of his own calling, rather than to the members of the "board," or the parents of his pupils, both of which, too often, are apt to be ignorant or careless of what he is doing. Of course, school boards can secure any kind of teacher they wish if they *demand* the preparation and *pay* the price.

\* \* \* \*

Other educators have decided that "grammar is a fetich" and that "out-worn and superfluous forms should be discarded in language." It is well to be progressive, but it does seem that, if people pretend to write and talk English at all, they ought to try to employ it in accordance with good usage. There can be such a thing as eating grammar with your knife at the banquet of knowledge.

It may be that "between you and I" will become good usage sometime, as "it is me" has become good usage in French. But really, what is the particular difficulty about learning the difference between the nominative and objective cases? It can be mastered at the age of ten years with a very moderate amount of work, and it is a handy thing to have about you all the rest of your life. If it isn't mastered in the so-called grammar-school period, apparently it is never mastered afterward; for there are plenty of university men, otherwise well educated, who say "between you and I" and that sort of thing. In the Duquesne Club, for instance, "a dice" is quite a common expression.

Correct pronunciation, too, like most other virtues, should begin at home. It may be too late to leave it to school. The average child is much more apt to get his basic and lasting impressions from his parents than from his teachers. Careless pronunciation around the family table invariably has its effect upon the young. It is exceedingly important, if we are to attempt to maintain anything like a standard of English, that the home help the school all it can in giving the child the earlier bent.

If careless habits of speech have been formed, a determined effort to correct them will lead to good results. By hearing the best English in the right sort of home and listening to it on the lips of quiet, refined people, as well as by continuous contact with it in good books, past and present, one acquires an instinctive sense of good usage which is never failing. The usage of educated persons is the basis of good English. Amusing experiences often presented themselves when Dorothy and you were little "tackers," in the effort of a teacher to convince you that a pronunciation learned at home was wrong—and I can recall an instance where either Dorothy or you rebelliously declined to pronounce the word national as if it were spelt *naytional* because it was not so pronounced at home.

On the other hand, not infrequently otherwise well-educated folk are found holding to erroneous pronunciation *acquired in the home*, which all their later schooling and knowledge have not supplanted. The original impression too often amounts to a deep-rooted and permanent provincialism.

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And what about the rapidly declining art of spelling. Every high school teacher and college professor knows that the offences committed against correct spelling are very often heinous; and the offenders are among those who have had years of opportunity in our best schools. It is begging the question to branch off into the anomalies of the language and point out the difficulties which have to be encountered in learning to spell. These difficulties always existed, and the point is that the old-timers spelled better than boys and girls now do with superior advantages of education.

Only in out-of-the-way places and among old-fashioned people do we ever hear of the old spelling bees such as Bret Harte commemorated in his account of what occurred in Angels, where—

“The chair then gave out ‘parallel’ and seven let it be,  
Till Joe waltzed in his double ‘l’ between the ‘a and e.’ ”

\* \* \* \*

In class recitations the teacher’s personality is of greater worth than all the knowledge he conveys. If he has not personality, if he is a “dead grammatical cinder” as Carlyle says, then there is no hope for moral instruction in him. But outside of the old-time recitation there might be a province of school work devoted to association and personal influence to which the whole arena of life should offer its wealth.

Teaching morals is not an intellectual matter at all. It is a soul affair, where association, environment and personality do the work. A real teacher will do more good than a library of moral philosophies. It is the heart that teaches us morals and not the head. Only the sensibilities, the emotions, the aspirations, the

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intuition and the faith are concerned in moral advancement. All the intellect in the world will not advance the moral situation a jot. The intellect deals almost entirely with matter, with figures, with form, with argument, with analysis; but the soul deals with honor, virtue, courage, purity, sacrifice and faith. One deals with circumstances; the other with verities. One is environment; the other is the divine energy.

Take from the teacher, during certain school hours, his routine, his grade sheets, his mechanical reports—give him the sway of his personality; let him cultivate and illuminate that and give him more play in the field of his duty. It is more important to inculcate honor, truthfulness, courtesy, decency and cleanliness in the young mind, than to squander all the time on tracing the source of Asiatic rivers and conjugating verbs. Better a boy should know that a table knife is not used by polite people to eat pie than to know all the capitals of Europe. Better teach him that such things as keeping his nails clean are as much a part of a boy's duty in the sight of God as other and more generally recognized virtues. The degree of skill with which a man ferries a spoonful of soup to his mouth, the lesser degree of noise with which he absorbs it, and to know which fork is designed to spear the oyster and which the fish—all of these things go to make up that intangible thing called "class." It is the little things that usually make or mar.

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As people grow older they learn through experience that manners have an enormous commercial value. Good manners have been well described as respect

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for one's self. That those who have within them the spirit of reverence and respect for themselves are always well mannered is perfectly true. Politeness is goodness of heart, and, in the lesser things of life, full of delicate attention. In the small matters of human society it sacrifices self and is an unostentatious and pleasing manner. It is a large part of the spirit of chivalry which inspires us to think nobler thoughts, and to do brave and self-sacrificing things in a magnanimous and modest way.

\* \* \* \*

But there is another side. The teacher speaks of the lack of care and effort bestowed on lessons assigned in school to be studied at home, and points out that the school has the boy only four or five hours out of the twenty-four, and that habits developed in so short a period are lost unless the home co-operates with the schools, and after all, and in spite of everything, this plea cannot be lightly dismissed. It puts us face to face, however, with the question whether the time when the home was the center of our life, industrially, educationally, religiously, socially, recreationally, is not largely a thing of yesterday? That type of home has passed, or is fast passing away. The days of the patriarchal family are over, and possibly it is well that they are.

New knowledge has brought a like change in all our institutional life, and invention has revolutionized business. Efficiency\* has been bringing the manufacturing end of business up to the mark, and the real problem that confronts us is to bring back the old-time efficiency of the home. It is common to hear men

\*See Lecture VI.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

of more mature years speak of what their mothers could do and did, but they are not so eloquent as to their wives and daughters. Why?

\* \* \* \*

We cannot, of course, bring back the old home, but we should at least try to save its spirit. The spirit of the old home was to have a constant interest on the part of both father and mother, in all that pertained to the welfare of the child. This may not always have expressed itself in the most intelligent way, judged by modern standards, but it was very genuine, very sincere. The need of our American homes today is to reproduce that passionate concern for the upbringing of children. It is the family education that is the most vital.

“Children should be seen and not heard” may be, happily perhaps, a forgotten saying in many households, but it was better than giving them an exalted idea of their own importance, and showing them off and parading and praising their mental accomplishments and physical magnificence. Some mothers really injure their offspring more by supposed kindness than they could possibly be injured by the most callous neglect of their fathers. The love which indulges and coddles is destructive; the love that challenges is creative. The love of God is virile as well as compassionate, the very reverse of a great deal of human love which, in its short-sightedness, wrecks that which it would save and destroys that which it would build up. The question is whether obedience, respect and humility are not the most useful things to be first put into a boy’s head and heart. The spoiled

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child used to be pointed out as an exception. Is he not now, to state the case frankly, too frequently the rule?

\* \* \* \*

There is one thing which the younger generation might remember without impairing in the least degree its much vaunted independence, and that is that individuality is not necessarily synonymous with rudeness, and lack of tact is not the inevitable accompaniment of broad-mindedness. In plain English, if we were as polite to our families as we are to the casual strangers whom we meet, as careful not to hurt their sensibilities or to jar their nerves or offend their taste, as scrupulously thoughtful in regard to the little things as we are when we are visiting or calling, we would soon learn that the big things take care of themselves. If we were kind as well as being broad-minded we would find a way of compromise between the older and the younger generation. It is always well to remember that it is possible to be quite certain about a thing, and quite wrong! Sometimes an individual may be sure that such-and-such a thing is so, when it is not. More often, perhaps, he is quite certain it is not so, when, as a matter of fact, it is. Those who have had much experience with the world know this attitude of dogmatic denial—of ignorance of facts well enough.

Some of the dearest possessions of our lives are linked with the quiet hours of our childhood, when gathered around the family hearth we were shut out from the world and given the homely, domestic joys that our fathers and mothers cultivated so assiduously.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

The training of families properly is almost impossible without "the quiet hour." If the after life of children is to hold only memories of the turmoil and rush of life there will be little strength and solidity of purpose in those lives. Without the memory of restful moments when association was blessed by the intimate and earnest fellowship that gives courage and hope, the young people of the present generation will lose a sense of power and of confidence that brought their forefathers safely through the trying problems and difficulties of a life in which men need to think as well as act.

\* \* \* \*

Wherever the great and beautiful work of art, a home, has come into being, the wife and mother has had her paramount existence in that home though her interests and activities have not necessarily been limited to its sphere. But father and children have been able to count on her in the home as they could count on the fire on the hearth, the cool shade of the tree, the water in the well.

Thus upon father and children is bestowed the experience which a great poet gained from his mother. "All became to her a wreath!"—a wreath where every day's toil, and holiday's joy, hours of labor and moments of rest, were leaf and blossom and ribbon. The wise educator is never one who is "educating" from morning to night. She is one who, unconsciously to the children, brings to them the chief sustenance and creates the supreme conditions for their growth.

Primarily she is the one who, through the serenity and wisdom of her nature, is dew and sunshine to

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growing souls. She is one who understands how to demand in just measure, and to give at the right moment. She is one whose desire is law, whose smile is reward, whose disapproval is punishment, whose caress is benediction. In such a presence you find something of the eternal light which streams from the throne of God. One good mother is worth a hundred schoolmasters. The strongest force in the world is the mother love. It was the primal manifestation of God here on earth.

\* \* \* \*

There is certainly a queer lapse in our present system. The old-fashioned housekeeper who commanded actively and saw that economies were observed has about vanished from the map. The modern servant would probably rebel against her meddling if she should reappear. For better, for worse, she is gone.

But who has taken her place? Who brings intelligence and conscience to the handling of household business? No one thus far. The art of housekeeping is practically in abeyance.

## LETTER XV

CINCINNATI—THE ROBERT BURNS CLUB

**I**N those days in Cincinnati we had a Robert Burns Club, and its annual celebrations were in a very real sense a feast of reason and a flow of soul. Burns himself might have enjoyed them. There was a humorous side to it all too, as there is to most things. In any case this club was one of my hobbies—something far away from the daily grind. It entertained many men whose names will endure. I have tried elsewhere to deal with Burns as a poet and will here refer to the club gatherings only. The bagpipes were always a feature and the subject of many a joke.

In the old wicked days bands of predatory English marched over the border. They were as bold and sturdy as the Scots and far greater in number. Cluny Macwhaupert, the Laird of Glen-Garragoyle, in desperate need of a sure defense, invented the pipes in secret and never let a skirl out of them till he faced the invading Sassenach on the bloody field. Then Cluny blew a melody so fierce, so eldritch, so grinding and blistering to the soul that every clansman ripped and slashed his way through the English hordes, intent on only one thing—to escape the fiendish screeching of the pipes. And that is why every grateful Scot to this day cherishes the bagpipe, the preserver of Scot-

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tish independence. He has beaten his sword into a plowshare, but he will always uphold the pipes to beat the band.

\* \* \* \*

Then there was the description of a Scotchman's heaven. This Scotchman had been to hear Gilmore's famous band\* but was greatly disappointed with the music of the great bandmaster, and said: "Ah, it was naething; but there is ae nicht I'll ne'er forget. There were 19 pipers besides myself, all in a wee bit parlor, all playing different tunes. I just thocht I was in heaven."

\* \* \* \*

There was also the canny Scottish banker who wouldn't permit his dinner to be cooked on Sunday but was always ready to charge twelve per cent on Monday.

\* \* \* \*

These Burns Club gatherings were the means of bringing together the best minds in the community, and to be asked to speak at one of them was considered at that day no small compliment. The primitive act of consuming food, including specially imported haggis, was only incidental. A Burns dinner meant something much more than a process of satisfying the animal wants; it was a ceremonial, a rite, an act of social consecration.

Speaking on one of the occasions, I said that for three hundred and sixty-four days in the year we are hardworking, law-abiding, tax-paying, God-fearing American citizens. On the three hundred and sixtieth day however, and this is its anniversary, we claim

\*Gilmore was the Dan Godfrey of the United States, and at the same period.

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by right of descent, by right of birth, by right of education and from choice to be Scotsmen. We are found in commercial life and in the learned professions. We are found in all religious denominations. We are represented in the roster of the Grand Army of the Republic. We are found in both great political parties; some of us are Republicans, some Democrats, but there are no Socialists, no Anarchists. You hear of the Irish vote and of the German vote, but never of the Scottish vote—of Scottish leadership—yes.

\* \* \* \*

Those meetings had an educative as well as a social function—they served to keep alive a knowledge of the wealth of poetry and song produced by a host of Scottish writers, of whom Burns is and probably always will be the chief.

He came when poets had forgot  
How rich and strange the human lot;  
How warm the tints of life; how hot  
Are love and hate;  
And what makes truth divine, and what  
Makes manhood great.

British literature owes much to Robert Burns. After a long captivity in those artificial forms of verse which culminated in the classic coldness of Pope, the lyric bard of Scotland restored to British poetry the old Elizabethan verve and fire. In his inspiring verse, hummed as he drove the plow toward the gate of sunrise, or caught as the lark sang wildly above him, we return, as at a leap, from the fetters of Art to the freedom of Nature. His lines are to be enjoyed as a bee enjoys flowers, by unpremeditated sipping of their varied sweets. His songs were a revelation to the

world. Men were swept back by them to the age of Shakespeare, and heard again, though in different chords, the music which had then enchanted mind and soul. We escape from the monotony of measured declamation to hear the human voice throbbing with emotion.

\* \* \* \*

At all of these meetings a certain old custom, more honored nowadays in the breach than in the observance, was never overlooked—the custom of saying grace before meat. It is very right to thus publicly acknowledge the daily dependence of mankind upon material comforts. The custom is a pretty and a proper one. It is not a matter of belonging to a church, believing in a creed or professing to be pious; it is an act of decency, and of human dignity and of that spiritual self-respect all souls ought to have, to say grace. Both Gentile and Jew could say this grace of Robert Louis Stevenson, liberal enough for all:

“Help us to repay in service one to another the debt of Thine unmerited benefits and mercies.”

It is reverence for that Supreme Guiding Spirit which marks us from the unsouled animals. Cecil Rhodes used to say that a man who did not believe in a Supreme Being was no better than a dog. Atheism makes a curse a mere rattle of dry peas in a fool’s bladder, as it makes a blessing a mere flutter of breath. Sidney Smith once called attention to the fact that animals did not enlarge their views. “The bees now build exactly as they built in the time of Homer; the bear is as ignorant of good manners as he was two thousand years past; and the baboon is still as unable

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to read and write as persons of honour and quality were in the time of Queen Elizabeth."

There are many people who affect to sneer at the elevating custom of saying grace, but these are not as a rule people of knowledge. Dignity is habitually lent to the habit of saying grace in the home when a minister of religion is present by inviting him to "ask a blessing;" albeit in connection with this highly decorous usage there is a story of a hungry general who at a formal dinner party, after casting his martial gaze round and round the groaning board, said, "In the absence of any member of the cloth, ladies and gentlemen, I will briefly say 'thank God.'" And there was also the rebellious little boy who refused at first to say grace for his dinner, because he did not like it as a whole, yet offered to compromise the matter, and "thank God for the apple pie."

\* \* \* \*

A certain distinguished jurist in Cincinnati in addressing one of the Burns dinners began with the words "Brither Scots," but the typesetter in the following morning's paper made him begin: "Brither Sots." Of course, it will have to be owned that a little drinking was the fashion at the gatherings. A young doctor was summoned from one of them to the aid of a well-to-do lady. When he pulled out his watch and put his fingers on the patient's wrist he could not count the pulse. "Drunk again," he muttered. The next morning he was requested to make an early call to see the lady, who received him most effusively: "Doctor," she said, "you are the first honest doctor I have ever had; I *was* drunk." And ever after she was

CINCINNATI—THE ROBERT BURNS CLUB

one of the doctor's staunchest adherents and best patients.

\* \* \* \*

It was a practice of this organization to invite any distinguished stranger who might happen to be in the city on the date of its annual dinner, and it came to pass that Mr. George Augustus Sala the famous journalist and war correspondent delivered in the United States a series of lectures, and the date of his Cincinnati lecture was January 26th, 1884. The 25th (*the day*) being on Sunday the Burns Club dinner came off the Monday following.

The pleasant, unaffected animation of Mr. Sala's manner was delightful. His first experience as a special correspondent was in the letters he wrote from Russia after the Crimean War to *Household Words*, to which his great contemporary Archibald Forbes was also a contributor, and of which Charles Dickens was for many years editor. Mr. Sala while in Cincinnati was the guest of Mr. Murat Halstead. They had been associated as special correspondents during the Civil War and also during the Franco-Prussian War, and it was in the latter campaign that Halstead by the boldness of his criticism, and the freedom with which he wielded a notably vigorous pen backed by an extensive vocabulary gained for himself the nickname of "The Field Marshal." As it happened Halstead had already accepted an invitation to speak at the Burns dinner, and being honorary secretary of the club, I called on him and said we would be highly honored if his friend Sala would join our party after his lecture. Halstead was delighted with the idea and said we must get him to make a

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speech, for he was the most charming and polished of after-dinner speakers; he was an after-dinner "prima donna."

I accordingly wrote Mr. Sala a formal invitation, and the following is a copy of his reply which luckily has been preserved:

Monday, January Twenty-Sixth.

Dear Sir:

Your servant apparently did not wait for an answer to your favour of this morning; since the note was only handed to me at the office of the hotel at 10 A. M. It will give me the greatest pleasure after my lecture this evening to attend the celebration by the Caledonian Club of the Burns Anniversary.

Thanking you for your courtesy,  
Believe me to be,

Faithfully yours,  
William Gibson, Esq.      GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

The President of the Club that year was my friend Mr. Robert F. Munro,\* and he asked me to introduce our distinguished guest, who in due season appeared, escorted by the "Field Marshal" and General E. F. Noyes, a former Governor of Ohio. He was greeted with hearty applause and every manifestation of welcome and good-fellowship. When quiet was restored I rose and spoke as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I beg the indulgence of this company while I infringe on the regular programme by the interpolation of a toast which, if its necessity could have been foreseen, would certainly have occupied an honored place on the list. I speak of the toast of "Our Guests" of this evening.

Our meetings, though mostly composed of Scotsmen, are not by any means exclusively confined to

\*Now President of the American Cotton Oil Company, 27 Beaver Street, New York.



MR. R. F. MUNRO



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that nationality, and we welcome all present who possess the great passport of admission to such a meeting—a mutual appreciation of the works and worth of Robert Burns.

I have the honor to attach the name of a gentleman to this toast who has by his achievements in literature and journalism, attained to a position of prominence in the world, and who is now a sojourner in our midst.

He has made unto himself a name by his journalistic contributions, his book publications, by his eminence in literature and by his talent and daring as a special correspondent—a new field which the daily newspapers and the electric telegraph developed for men of courage, talent and spirit. His “Echoes of the Week,” in the *Illustrated London News* we have read for years with infinite profit and pleasure, and I am gratified to have this opportunity to introduce to you in person a gentleman who has contributed so much to contemporary thought.

Gentlemen, I allude to our honored guest, Mr. George Augustus Sala.

\* \* \* \*

Mr. Halstead was right. The response was a model of its kind and for that reason it is a great pity we did not have it reported. Sala expressed his delight at being honored by an invitation to a Scottish gathering. He felt bound to accept it as an humble representative of the adjacent peninsula of England which is annexed to Scotland. The conquest of England begun by Robert Burns, was continued by Sir Walter Scott and finished by Thomas Carlyle. The Queen's favorite home was in Balmoral Castle, and English people were adopting Scottish fashions. Their children were wearing Tam O'Shanter caps, and the women Balmoral skirts and Balbriggan hose. India was invented for

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the benefit of the Scots, in order that the Highlanders might raise the Siege of Lucknow, and give world-wide fame to that prophetic\* Scotch woman. In like vein he continued his address to the great delight of the gathering.

\* \* \* \*

After Mr. Sala died in England a number of years later, the following letter appeared in the *Commercial Gazette*:

Cincinnati, December 9, 1895.

To the Editor:

In the most interesting sketch of the late Mr. George Augustus Sala, perhaps the greatest special correspondent of them all, in today's issue, you simply allude to a gift which he possessed in an unusual degree, viz: the power of speech. Up to the time of his death he was considered and frequently referred to as the best after-dinner speaker in London, a distinction he is said to have enjoyed since the death of Charles Dickens, twenty-five years ago.

On the occasion of his visit to Cincinnati some ten years past, he was the guest of the Burns Club at their annual dinner, and the charming and sparkling and altogether original remarks he made, on that occasion, will not be forgotten by those whose privilege it was to hear them. And yet he said nothing in particular. It was the sparkle, the unconventionality, the brightness, the charm, the wit, the indefinable something which causes one to feel he is under the spell of a master that made the impression.

Among other speakers on that occasion were the late General Noyes and Mr. Murat Halstead, both of whom knew Mr. Sala well. Mr. Halstead and Mr. Sala had been fellow-correspondents during both our own Civil War, and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Mr. J. B. Foraker† and Judge Samuel F. Hunt were also present.

The style and manner and matter of the speech

\*I have heard mutiny veterans say that this story is bosh.

†Afterward Governor of Ohio and United States Senator.

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were so different from what Cincinnatians had been accustomed to hear before, that it must have come in the nature of a revelation to most of those present. If Murat Halstead never laughed before nor since, he laughed that night.

WILLIAM GIBSON.

\* \* \* \*

One of the active members of the Burns Club at that period was Mr. Charles Stewart, and he had a friend and neighbor whose name was Mr. Theodore Cook. One evening Cook, a former president of the *Cincinnati Southern Railway*, said to Stewart: "Charlie, you are a strange combination—a Scotsman, a Republican and a Catholic; how is it possible for any man to be all three?"

Stewart said, "Well, Theodore, as for being a Scotsman, I was not consulted on that subject; as for being a Catholic, the Reformation as you call it, we call it the *Revolution*, did not reach as far north as Aberdeenshire where my forbears had lived for centuries, and where I was born, therefore they were not contaminated by you heretics; as for being a Republican, I was a boy in Albany, N. Y., when the war broke out. All the boys of our family who were old enough joined the army, and those of them who lived to be mustered out were Republicans, and, when I was old enough to vote, I thought that if the principles of that party had been good enough for them to fight and die for, they were good enough for me to vote for."

\* \* \* \*

In 1895 I was for the third time president of the Club, and at the annual dinner, Mr. M. E. Ingalls spoke to the "Immortal Memory." I introduced the speaker as follows:

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My brother members of the Burns Club, and guests:

A certain much-discussed poet and playwright, who flourished many years ago, and who might have been a Scotsman but for the accident of birth, wrote that "brevity is the soul of wit."

It is fortunate for me, but perhaps more fortunate for you, that it is the duty of the chairman on an occasion like the present to observe this injunction and be brief. I purpose therefore to say but a word, and then lapse into silence which is said to be golden, and sit like Paul of old at the feet of Gamaliel, and listen to our distinguished guests, who by their presence here tonight, have honored not only the Burns Club, but the land which gave Robert Burns to the world.

We are here in no spirit of self-exaltation; we are here to rekindle and keep alive our association with a land which has made an indelible mark in history; we are here to do honor to that which is eternally unforgettably—the memory of Robert Burns. We are humble worshippers at the shrine of his divine genius; we are here to scatter flowers on the grave of Scotland's best loved son.

Sir Walter Scott was largely instrumental in revealing Scotland to the outside world. He shot the search-light of his genius into her unexplored history. He popularized Scotland. In his poetry he praised her chivalry, and displayed her wealth of tradition. What the dead masters have done for Scotland is being done today by her living authors. The mantle of Sir Walter has fallen on Robert Louis Stevenson. And we hear much at present of "Kailyard" literature. There are competent judges who hold that we are having too much of it. But it cannot be gainsaid that Scottish novels, sketches and stories have, for the time, captivated the reading public all over the English-speaking world. If the literature of a country be popular, it is natural to suppose that that country is

being much discussed, and is retaining a firm hold on the imagination and affection of the public.

Our motto in holding these annual celebrations has not been "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," but rather, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we live." They serve to give expression to the pride of race and the loyalty to national traditions which characterize the Scottish people wherever they are found, and which neither time nor changed surroundings can impair. Furthermore, they illustrate in a notable way the service which the race has rendered to the cause of civilization by its cultivation of the refining arts of poetry and literature which from time immemorial have been held in high esteem and pursued with unflagging zeal by the Scottish people.

It has been said that good Scotsmen usually make good Americans. It had been better said that good Scotsmen *always* make good Americans. From the days of Alexander Hamilton down to the present day, we believe there has never been a period when citizens of Scottish birth or Scottish ancestry have not exercised their hands and their brains in the interests of this Republic and her liberties.

It is with the hope that we will be better for meeting here; it is with the hope that we may live greater lives tomorrow and with each succeeding tomorrow that we meet and eat and drink here at all. In these meetings we have no knowledge of political or party questions—we recognize no party, except the most agreeable party I see seated around these tables. I hail it as the noblest and most beautiful circumstance of all that we gather together on neutral ground; nothing of a class or sectarian nature mars our pleasure. We assert only the great and omnipotent principle which I cannot express better than in the living, burning words of Burns himself. We assert only:

"That man to man the world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a' that."

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But it is my duty to observe the silence which I have commended as golden, and before resuming my seat I shall take the opportunity to announce the regrets of several gentlemen who are prevented from being with us. I will not detain you with the letters but simply mention the names: The Right Reverend Bishop of this Diocese, Dr. Boyd Vincent; the Rev. Peter Robertson; Governor McKinley;\* The Solicitor General of the United States,† General Kilpatrick of Springfield—a Scotsman whose name was enrolled early when the volunteers were called for in 1861; Mr. David Gibson; Dr. Graydon; Mr. Perry Heath and others.

Gentlemen, I will not further interpose myself between you and the pleasure we all anticipate in hearing the speakers whose names appear on our program, neither will I be guilty of anything so utterly unnecessary as to attempt to introduce to you the distinguished gentleman whose name is coupled with the toast which, at a Burns banquet, always comes first—a gentleman who has done much for our beautiful city—by whose works we know him, and whose name is written in all his deeds.

Gentlemen, Mr. Melville E. Ingalls.

\* \* \* \*

Among the many distinguished men who were in sympathy with these celebrations was the Hon. Samuel F. Hunt, one of the Judges of the Superior Court of Cincinnati. He always impressed me as being of the type of man who would never wilfully and designedly “walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners nor sit in the seat of the scornful.”

Mr. Hunt was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, a hereditary patriotic society which was organ-

\*Afterwards President of the United States.

†Mr. Lawrence Maxwell, a member of the Club.

## CINCINNATI—THE ROBERT BURNS CLUB

ized in 1783 by the American and European officers of the Continental army. The object of the society, as stated at the time, was "to perpetuate the mutual friendships which have been formed under the pressure of common danger \* \* \* the Society to endure as long as they shall endure, or any of their closest male posterity." As the officers were about to return to their homes which they had left to fight the battles of the Republic they named the organization the Society of the Cincinnati, after their Roman prototype, Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus.

Mr. Hunt was one of the most genial and delightful of associates. He was a gentleman, a scholar and a lawyer. He seemed, as did Lord Bacon, "to have taken all knowledge for his province." He devoured law books as a caterpillar eats mulberry leaves, and curls up and digests them into fine silk. His wit was of the richest order and he was the most charming of after-dinner speakers. Like Yorick, he would "set the table in a roar." He never missed a Burns dinner, and among many other accomplishments which every gentleman should possess, he knew how to write a letter as the following will show:

Consultation Room  
THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CINCINNATI  
My dear Mr. Gibson:

The invitation to be present at the annual dinner to the memory of Robert Burns is accepted with acknowledgments for the courtesy.

The quotation from Ben Jonson is capital.

Please say to Mrs. Gibson that her last dinner was excellent  
and greatly enjoyed. Faithfully,  
January the Sixteenth, 1895. SAMUEL F. HUNT.

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Consultation Room  
THE SUPERIOR COURT OF CINCINNATI

My dear Mr. Gibson:

The announcement of the one hundred and thirty-seventh anniversary of Burns' Birthday is at hand.

The literary part of the work is excellent, and you are most fortunate in the selection of speakers.

I have only words of commendation. I must say, my good friend, that you are incomparable in this direction.

Believe me, Faithfully

St. Jackson's Day, 1896.

SAMUEL F. HUNT.

To Mr. William Gibson.

BAIRD OAK

My dear Mr. Gibson:

It was gratifying to me to notice the splendid personal tribute at Pittsburgh.

I follow you and yours with an abiding affection.

Believe me, your attached friend,

Glendale, Ohio, Oct. 24, 1900.

SAMUEL F. HUNT.

## LETTER XVI

### CINCINNATI—THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

An address before the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, 1894.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, one of the most successful exponents of after-dinner speaking, once enumerated what he called “the ingredients of after-dinner oratory.” “They are,” he said, “the joke, the quotation, and the platitude,” and he goes on to say that in his judgment, the successful platitude requires a very high order of genius. Thus admonished, I shall keep my weather eye open for thin ice.

When Dr. Graydon—by the way, a member of a more ancient and a somewhat more universal order than either the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick or the Caledonian Society, an order which knows no bounds or nationality or party or creed, and the constitution of which is still unwritten—I refer to the ancient and cosmopolitan order of scholarship and brains—when Dr. Graydon conveyed to me the invitation of your committee to respond to this toast I felt so vanquished and subdued that he actually took my breath away.

It had been my hope to attend the Friendly Sons' banquet, as I had done with so much pleasure and profit in previous years, and stake my reputation on the power of observing a golden silence.

Your committee has entrusted me with a toast the very mention of which in a meeting of “Friendly Sons,” is, I am sure, its own recommendation. It is our “Guests and Sister Societies.” The mere use of the

term “Sister Societies” implies, as I believe, the existence of a cordial and friendly and fraternal feeling between the members of these societies, and I am very glad and very proud to say that I never once attended a Friendly Sons, a New England or a Caledonian Society banquet at which this delicate sentiment was not given an honored place on the programme.

What more beautiful sentiment than that expressed in the term “Our Sister Societies” could be honored at these annual gatherings—gatherings which bring us together on an independent footing and on neutral ground? These meetings give echoing expression to the gayest and gladdest impulses of our nature. They glow with the mutual fire of mind brought into contact with mind. They lay bare that rich mine of joyousness which lies beneath the rough rock surface of the national character. They are a perennial source of brightness and good fellowship.

While we glory in our Americanism and in the greatness of our adopted land, we do not, we can not forget—we are proud of our nationality. “Show me a man,” said the late Senator Everett, “who is ashamed of the land of his birth, and I will show you a man to be watched in the land of his adoption.”

The Scottish and Irish citizens of Cincinnati have long recognized that the songs of Tom Moore and Robert Burns are joint property. We feel that both Moore and Burns came to the whole world, although one happened to come by the way of Ireland and the other by the way of Scotland. Speaking of Burns, I cannot help remarking that it is strange that so many truly great men came to the world by the way of cottages. Abraham Lincoln who is a case in point, used to say that God must have loved poor people—he made so many of them.

My first impulse is to exchange congratulations with

CINCINNATI—THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

you, and shake hands, in the spirit at least, with every member of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Speaking as a Scotsman, and as a representative of the Scottish societies, it might appear to be too much of an interchange of compliments between near relations, so to speak, were I to enter into any lengthened expression of the thanks of your “Guests” for the honor you have done us.

I may however, without impropriety, remark that your venerable sister, the Caledonian Society, whose continuous existence in this city dates from 1825, and her younger sister the Burns Club are both strong and healthy, temperate, wise and of good repute. I may further say, also I trust, without impropriety, that they have a great affection for you, and that it is a great gratification to both the Caledonian Society and the Burns Club to see themselves so well remembered in your midst, and to know that they are honored guests at your hospitable board.

There are many questions which it has been said will never be satisfactorily and finally answered by man. For example it has perplexed people to know why the young German Emperor quarrelled with Bismarck; it has also been a subject of discussion all the way from Mount Auburn and other seats of learning in our midst, reaching even to John O’Groats and Ballylongford, as to whether Bacon wrote Shakespeare. But there is another unsettled question which is of special interest on an occasion like the present, and that is the question as to who St. Patrick, whose day we celebrate, was.

While some evidence points to his having been an Irishman, and other authorities—equally good, perhaps—declare that he was a Frenchman, still there are certain obscure and revolutionary individuals who have been known to set up the claim that St. Patrick was born in Scotland. They even go so far as to say

## LETTERS TO MY SON

that the wrong Society celebrates the 17th of March, and that possibly may have something to do with the fact that I always feel so much at home among you.

Some unkind and ill-informed persons have been known to intimate that the Scots are not conspicuous for extravagance, or even liberality, but I think you must admit that we were very good and generous to you when we sent you St. Patrick, or rather when we allowed you to take him, for we read that he was carried to Ireland as a slave in his early days. He journeyed to France and then to Rome, and when he came to teach the Gospel in the latter place his heart became filled with an ardent desire to return to Ireland and convert her people to Christianity. Sometime about A. D. 430 he found his way back to the land of his dear desire. There for sixty years he labored and finally died on Irish soil.

St. Patrick's day to every student of history is a day important to men of every nationality, and of every religious faith, as well as to Irishmen and to those who believe in the Catholic religion.

St. Patrick proved that courage is the greatest asset of the human being, and that what a man is determined to get, he can get, if he will fight persistently and without fear.

Ireland at this time was indeed the center of learning. It is claimed the true shape of the world was recognized in Ireland before Copernicus, and that fully five hundred years before the birth of Galileo, the solar system was understood and taught with an advanced knowledge of astronomy.

Through the inspiration of its new faith, Ireland—already intellectual, learned, artistic and industrious, found immediate quickening of all its ambitions along these lines. St. Patrick introduced the Roman alphabet and popularized Latin which became, and so continued for centuries, the channel of polite inter-

course among western nations. At the same time he encouraged culture and learning in the Gaelic mother tongue. Wherever he went in Ireland he was followed by men of intellect and skill. There were architects and scribes in his train; there were carpenters and goldsmiths. For centuries afterward this influence was felt throughout the length and breadth of the land.

So great is the reverence for this supreme saint in Ireland, that this day has been made a legalized holiday, an honor not conferred on the patron saint of any other country.

I would fain enlarge on Irishmen whom I know so well, and on Ireland which I love so well. I shall not even attempt to name any part of the glittering array of statesmen and soldiers and authors whom she proudly calls her sons. I cannot, however, refrain from referring, in a word, to that fecundity of sentiment and copiousness of expression which characterize her orators, from Fox and Burke; Grattan and Daniel O'Connell, down to the late Henry Grady and Burke Cochran.

Whether St. Andrew was a Scotsman or an Irishman may be an open question, but there can be no question that he came to be chosen the patron saint of Scotland because he discovered the boy who had the loaves and fishes, and the Scots have been after the loaves and fishes ever since. History is silent on the question, but it is reasonably certain that the Scots never gave up St. Patrick without a consideration. Perhaps it was a case of trading saints.

You may have heard of the Kerry man who went to market and asked the price of chickens. He was told fifty cents apiece. "Fifty cents, why in Kerry you could buy them for sixpence apiece."

"Then why did you not stay in Kerry?"

"Sure," said the Irishman, "sixpences are too scarce over there."

## LETTERS TO MY SON

And there was also the New York alderman who, visiting Cork, drove out to Blarney Castle. He found an old woman selling flowers, and he asked how much she charged for them:

She said, "A penny apiece, sir."

"Why," said he, "you could get fifty cents apiece for them in New York."

"Ah, yer honor," said the old dame, "and if ye had the Lakes of Killarney in hell, you could sell the wather for a dollar a pint!"

I am an entire stranger to some of you, but not I am glad to say to all of you, yet I am no stranger and I say it with great gratitude, to the warmth of Irish hearts. Like the Scots they are proud of their nationality and of the race from which they sprang. May nothing but the channel ever roll between them.

\* \* \* \*

The Dr. Graydon (Thomas W. Graydon) above referred to was one of my old and intimate friends in Cincinnati. He was an alumnus of Trinity College, Dublin, and had qualified as a physician and surgeon but, being a man of comfortable means did not in later years actively practice his profession. He preferred to interest himself in educational, financial and municipal affairs, although he neither sought nor held office. His devotion to the education of his sons was splendid, and all of them were Harvard men.

Graydon was the most delightful of companions. With some people the usual processes of acquaintanceship are marvellously hurried and curtailed. Some people, on the other hand, you can meet every day for twenty years and never know them; others you know and like in the first twenty minutes. The pre-established harmony is realized in a few moments



DR. THOMAS W. GRAYDON



of time; and the new friend makes advances and takes possession of you before you know where you are. And in my friendship with Graydon I was a willing captive.

He was held in respect and confidence by the community. He had the capacity for sympathetic appreciation of the feelings and motives of others. From him radiated a sweetness and tenderness that were contagious. He was modest and unassuming, never vaunting himself. If the beautiful dream of the poet be true, that on the roll of the book of gold hereafter the names of those who loved their fellow men shall be first inscribed, then his name will be found high up on the list. Surely such a life did not end when death came. Its influence must remain and pass on. There is a tide of thought and influence which will continue to flow towards its far-off ocean. Like the fabled fountain of Arethusa it will appear in the streams of perennial beauty. \* \* \* \*

Not the least of his accomplishments was his familiar knowledge of Shakespeare's plays. He was fond of the play.

On the occasion of one of Henry Irving's visits to Cincinnati, Graydon had a few friends to meet the great actor at the club after the play, and it was my privilege to be one of them. Another of the guests, a well-known personage in newspaper life, who sat next Irving was very attentive to him—indeed almost effusive, constantly making suggestions or recommendations as to this dish or that vintage, all of which was very poor form of course. When the servant came to pass the cigars, carrying two or three boxes of

## LETTERS TO MY SON

different brands in one hand, this “well-known personage” remarked, “Oh, Sir Henry, let me recommend *this* cigar!”

Irving put out his hand in the direction of the cigars, and taking one without looking at them, replied in a quite audible whisper, “Oh, I’m sure our host wouldn’t offer me a *poor* cigar!”

I have never been quite sure whether Irving’s remark was intended as a gentle rebuke or whether it was only another evidence of his habit of observation, for it is certain that in any little social attention given him here he never would be offered a “poor” cigar, although he might have encountered a “poor” or rather unsuitable glass of wine. The opposite is the rule on the other side. There one may frequently encounter hitherto unknown cigar brands, but never a “poor” glass of wine.

\* \* \* \*

Many good stories were told that night, and I recall one of them.

A well-known English actress who had recently been married, was the subject of conversation, when some one remarked that before the event she had made a full confession to the happy bridegroom of all her former lovers.

“What touching confidence,” some one remarked.

“What needless trouble,” said another.

Whereupon Howard Saxby piped in with: “What a remarkable memory!”

\* \* \* \*

Irving to me was a wonderful actor. Of course, I have not the skill or power to analyze critically his





MR. HOWARD SAXBY

CINCINNATI—THE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

genius, to weigh it in the balance of opinion or to say that in this it was excellent, or in that it was deficient. But this I do say, that he had the extraordinary power of expressing to me, and making me comprehend what was in his own mind and what was his own distinct intellectual conviction. It is not for me, a mere occasional, a very occasional play-goer, to pick out this particular character or that particular character, but in my judgment the genius of Irving culminated in Shylock and in the intense malignity of the villain in the Lyons Mail.

\* \* \* \*

Graydon had a fund of Irish stories and the following is one of the period:

An American sympathizer with Ireland was told by a local leader of the Fenians at Queenstown, that the Fenians were so strong that they could “anny day dhrive out the opprisor!”

“Well, why don’t you do it, then?” the American asked.

“Sure,” the reply came back, “the police won’t let us.”

\* \* \* \*

Cincinnati, March 1st, 1900.

My dear Billy:

I am heartbroken! You know how we both loved Graydon. Well, he’s gone. Thank God *you* are left. He was awfully fond of you, and the last time I saw him he told me how they were looking forward to the pleasure of entertaining you and Mrs. Gibson in the near future.

I have just returned from a two weeks’ lecture tour\* and got your letter about Press Club Banquet only this morning. Wire me when you come and make my house your home. Together we sorrow today. Always yours,

HOWARD SAXBY,

\*This reference is to a course of readings given by Whitcomb Riley and Howard Saxby.

## LETTER XVII

### THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD DISCIPLINE OF RAILROAD EMPLOYEES—1895

**I**T was the custom of the *Big Four Railroad* for many years at the periodical staff meetings to make a feature of each meeting the reading of a paper on some subject of living and general interest.

These meetings were held for a family discussion of the railroad and its affairs, when questions of operating efficiency, improved service and other betterments were taken up, one at a time, and seriously discussed, and my old friend Mr. J. Q. VanWinkle, the General Superintendent usually presided and he saw to it that there was nothing perfunctory about them.

On one of these occasions I was assigned the subject "Discipline of Railroad Employees," with special reference to engine and train service. At the period to which reference is made there was quite a wave of talk on the subject, but the first *public* utterance was a paper read by Mr. Ralph Peters,\* Superintendent of the Cincinnati Division, Pennsylvania Lines West. This brought out many others but the following paper was a departure from any which preceded it, in that it flatly put up to officials their full share of responsibility for a situation which was then rapidly becoming serious, and which upon the whole has been very badly and weakly handled on the railroad side. Operating officials held meetings and made agreements with each

\*Now President Long Island Railroad.

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

other and they too often kept them like a bunch of general freight agents of the period.

This contribution to the discussion of discipline was generally published and elicited quite a good deal of comment. A few of the letters received at the time, and which have survived are given.

### PAPER READ BY MR. WILLIAM GIBSON, SUPT.

In discussing the question of discipline I shall at the outset assume that we are agreed on two points:

First, that in the matter of discipline prevention is better than cure.

Second, that the divine injunction to do unto others as we would be done by is still a living principle, and not a dead letter, for regardless of any superfine theory to the contrary, the "personal equation" is the one that comes home to the human breast with greater force than the abstract principle.

So much has been said and written in the past year on the subject of discipline that one is at a loss where to begin and what not to say, and my endeavor in this paper will be to comment on the subject in a conversational way, and in a way which, I trust, will provoke friendly discussion.

It being admitted, then, that in the matter of discipline prevention is more profitable than cure, it seems to me that our first duty is to see to it that only good material is hired for brakemen and firemen. Just what is meant by the term good material it is not easy to define accurately, although I feel certain that the point of the expression will readily appeal to any one who has had charge of trainmen. By good material I mean young men, preferably not exceeding 22 or 23 years old, of good physique and good habits, and who possess at least a fair elementary education.

As a general principle I believe it is good policy for each division to *make* its own men, and that the rule

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should only be departed from where the force has been allowed to run down, or following such an emergency as we were confronted with in the A. R. U. strike of July, 1894. Then the only alternative is to hire experienced men and build up the service with a new force. In either event, however, no one, more especially a so-called experienced man, should be taken into the service without first making a most searching inquiry into his antecedents.

The result of not filling the ranks with good material must be apparent to all of us, and there are few divisions on which one can not find men running both trains and engines whom nature must have intended for anything under the sun but railroad men.

Speaking generally and taking one division with another, or for that matter one system with another, I have about come to the conclusion that 75 per cent of the men in train and engine and yard service may be classified as first-class men, provided they are handled by efficient officials, and provided also that they are treated fairly and without partiality. Fifteen per cent, which for the sake of distinction I will call the second class, are good, steady, promising men, who are working hard to qualify themselves for the first class. This gives us 90 per cent who are all right, if handled right.

The remaining 10 per cent or third class, are the people on a railroad who keep division officials busy. The chief end of their existence seems to be to get in the miles or the time regardless of how their work is done, to make as much overtime as possible, and to trump up imaginary grievances. The percentage of this last class will rise or fall according to the caliber of the trainmaster and master mechanic, and blessed is the superintendent who has associated with him a master mechanic and a trainmaster with their assistants, who can so select and control and educate their

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

men that this percentage will be reduced to an absolute minimum.

Past history has demonstrated that this third class (and it is not by any means confined to young men) can not be too closely looked after, with a view to educating or clubbing it upward if possible, or to, otherwise, wiping it out of existence—for the only way to reform some men is to reform them out of the service. Our experience in the recent labor trouble taught us that this class did exist on the *Big Four* road, and we know that it not only swallowed up the second, but made such inroads into the first as to temporarily paralyze the freight traffic of the system.

But we must not throw all the blame on the men, and I desire to be very specific on this point, even at the risk of appearing to go out of my way. Most of the writers who have recently appeared in print on this discipline question seem to have tacitly assumed that officials enjoy a monopoly of the wisdom to be found on a railroad. Such I think is very far from being the case, and I trust there may be no offense in my saying that I do not believe we can discuss the discipline question to advantage unless we disabuse our minds of any such hypothesis.

It behooves us to look nearer home for much of the cause of dissatisfaction and discontent which are certain forerunners of trouble. Railroad men who are my seniors, and my masters in the profession, tell me that not so many years ago the grievance committee, as we understand the term today, was a totally unknown quantity, and why? Echo answers, Why?

Is it not simply because the growth and development of the employee has been out of proportion to the growth of the average official? Have a large proportion of officials, and I use the term in the widest geographical sense, not stood still while the rank and file have progressed? Have we not been overlooking the

## LETTERS TO MY SON

fact that the average employee of today is a man of education superior to that of his class twenty years ago? Have we not been applying old methods to new material? Certain it is that education is the forcing bed of intelligence, and intelligence begets reasoning power.

Is the modern grievance committee not to a great extent the result of indiscriminating, unfair and arbitrary decisions made in the dealing out of so-called discipline for irregularities, real and technical, as well as unavoidable? Did the officer not too often go into an investigation and sit in the height of the scouter's chair, firm in the belief that he was a prosecuting attorney instead of a truth-seeker? Did he not too often lose sight of the fundamental principle that in the operation and management of a railroad property the interests of official and employee are identical—that they should be in sympathy with each other and pull together? The ignoring of this principle has had disastrous effects, and it requires but little acumen to see that the corporations will pay the fiddler.

Decisions were given which intelligent trainmen knew were not sound, and who can calculate the demoralizing effect of such action, regardless of whether the men escaped being disciplined when they should have been or otherwise? A just suspension may benefit a man, though it seldom does, but an unjust one changes all his blood to gall. The losses mankind sustain may be borne with philosophical patience, unless they are the fruits of manifest injustice. If they come from injustice, they rankle in the bosom so long as there is a beating heart.

With the increased intelligence of trainmen came a protest against such action, which the generation preceding them would have accepted as a matter of course. Gentlemen, have we not been putting old wine in new bottles? That quotation is made with apologies to St. Luke.

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Was it not for self-protection that the men banded themselves together? Is it not also true that, emboldened by their success in presenting legitimate grievances, and never being slow to perceive when they were dealing with vacillating and weak-kneed officials, they then took up, as an after-thought, such questions as callers, hostlers, constructive mileage, overtime, and, finally, the wage scale, with results which need not here be enumerated?

Beware of committees, but above all beware of *making* committees. The prudent and intelligent officer will, by slow degrees and constant contact, educate his men to the fact that he is their friend and master. He will know them, and, when necessary, will freely converse with them. He will encourage them to come to him as individuals with any legitimate grievance which may exist. He will frankly discuss such questions. He will give decided answers promptly. His no will be "No," and his yes will be "Yes." He will never indulge in the mental gymnastics known as "straddling a fence." He will fearlessly and honestly let his men know where he stands. In requiring the most absolute truthfulness on the part of his men he will faithfully accord it on his part without evasion or mental reservation.

No official can maintain or enforce discipline unless he has the respect of his force, and no one can have the real respect of his force unless by his actions he commands it.

Speaking for the Cincinnati Division, I am very glad to say that the men realize that there is now no need of committees. Each man is his own committee on his own grievance. We have had no committees from any class of employees on any subject whatever for a period of nearly two years, nor would I tolerate\* the committee system as it existed several years ago. No superintendent can spend half of his time on

\*Note 1913. I have to smile today at my use of the word "tolerate."

## LETTERS TO MY SON

committees and give his division the close personal supervision which is necessary.

As I stated at the outset, we consider we have three classes of men, and we also have three grades of discipline, viz: Reprimand, suspension and dismissal.

Where discipline is necessary we aim to apply the reprimand whenever possible, and I do not believe that I am wandering into the realms of Utopia when I declare the belief that a force properly selected and trained, and judiciously handled, can, in time, be brought to such a state of efficiency and loyalty that the necessity for either suspension or dismissal will be of very rare occurrence. Such offences as dishonesty, intoxication, misrepresentation of facts, or insubordination, I will not take up your time discussing. They all call for immediate and unceremonious dismissal.

In a recent paper, and, by the way, in many respects one of the ablest papers I have yet seen on the subject, Mr. Darlington, of the Indianapolis Division of the Pennsylvania Lines, stated that suspensions and fines, as forms of discipline, were relics of barbarism. I heartily agree with him, and God speed the day when they will be unknown on this and every other system. I do not, however, agree with the Fall Brook\* idea of bulletins which he has adopted. The system of bulletins may do very well where it is so arranged that no one but an employee of the division can have access to them, although even then I would question the wisdom of the plan, but where the public can reach them, as they could in our case, the practice is open to strong objection. It must be humiliating in the extreme to any man to have his offense advertised, and where you needlessly humiliate a man you demoralize him and the service suffers.

Mr. Darlington's idea of recording debits and credits is a very happy one, and practically abolishes actual suspension, and for that reason I favor it; in fact I

\*This reference is to a paper by Mr. Brown, Superintendent of the Fall Brook Railroad.

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

would be willing to advocate any practical common-sense plan to take the place of suspension. Still there is a question whether the system would be appreciated by the men, except on a division where a high *morale*—a high state of efficiency, already existed.

As stated before, we use suspension as a form of discipline, but never apply it without feeling that, while following a practice common to the whole system, in doing so, we were behind and not in touch with the spirit of the times. Some one will say, "It has served the purpose for a long time; what have you to offer in its stead?" I answer, true, it has served the purpose, but not by any means served it well. The stage coach served the purpose. Suspension, as a form of discipline, has been a dangerous weapon in the hands of a certain class of unthinking officials, and the railroads have paid dearly for its use or, rather, its misuse.

I have nothing original to offer in its place and therefore borrow Mr. Darlington's idea of debit and credit, minus any bulletin arrangement, and I recommend the adoption of that plan on the *Big Four* road. The record can be kept by the time-keeper without expense, and when a record is made a copy of the entry should be sent to the man interested. If the entries on the debit side of any man's account come too rapidly it will be regarded as evidence that he is incompetent and not a fit man for the service, and his removal will be in order. These entries may be the result of carelessness, or of what is known in the vernacular of railroad life as "bad luck," but in either case the action should be the same, regardless of any sentimental objections to the contrary. I have always thought that the rule of the late Baron Rothschild, to have as little as possible to do with an unlucky man, was good business policy.

Our dischargeable offenses, speaking in a general way, will then be dishonesty, intoxication, misrepre-

## LETTERS TO MY SON

sentation of facts, insubordination and continued incapacity after fair trial, in addition to what are now known as recklessly damaging equipment, etc.

If it is not out of place in this paper I would, in conclusion, recommend the policy of taking care of old and faithful employees, men who have grown gray in the service.

I would also recommend and urge upon our management that we encourage and assist in the establishment of branches of the Young Men's Christian Association at all important terminals as a counter attraction to the saloon and the street corner; that we officially make an effort to find somewhere for our men, particularly our younger men, to spend the evenings which they lay over away from home instead of forcing them to find it for themselves, and we all know that the average boarding house can scarcely be expected to be very attractive.

Gentlemen, I have finished. In presenting to you this paper on Discipline I have tried to bear in mind that there are two sides to every question. I trust we will have a full and frank discussion, for no subject brought before us can more vitally touch the best interests of this corporation.

\* \* \* \*

THE PITTSBURGH, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO & St. LOUIS Ry. Co.  
Office of the Superintendent, Cincinnati Division  
Cincinnati, Ohio, May 18, 1895.

MR. WILLIAM GIBSON,  
Supt. C. C. C. & St. L. Ry., Springfield, O.

Dear Sir: I have your favor of the 16th inst., enclosing copy of the proceedings of the *Big Four* family meeting at Indianapolis, containing your paper on Discipline. It has given me a great deal of pleasure to see what the *Big Four* are doing and more especially to read your very able document. As I stated to you yesterday, my essay on Discipline, while the first paper on the subject, was simply a school-boy's composition, and although but a feeble effort, it certainly did some good, since it has resulted in the preparation of such a comprehensive paper as we have

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

in this case from you. I had Mr. Waters and several of my staff read the paper while with me on the pay car, yesterday, and they all appreciated it very much. I heartily concur in all that you have said and I congratulate you upon your success.

Yours truly,

RALPH PETERS, Superintendent.

RAILWAY ENGINEERING AND MASTER MECHANIC

Chicago, June 4, 1895.

My dear Gibson:

I am greatly pleased with your paper on Discipline. It is the strongest statement that has yet been presented on the subject and I shall really feel under obligations if you will allow me to publish it.

I hope to see you soon and have a long talk with you. Meanwhile may the winds blow only from the kindly airts.

Your friend,

EDWIN N. LEWIS.

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERING

256 Broadway, New York

June 4, 1895.

MR. WILLIAM GIBSON, Supt. C. C. C. & St. L. R. R.

Springfield, Ohio

My dear Gibson:

I have to thank you cordially for the copy of the proceedings of your April meeting and also the programme of your Burns Anniversary Dinner.

I have read with a great deal of interest your article on Discipline, and I think it is one of the best things I have read. You have the right idea of treating men as men. The schoolmaster has been too long abroad in the land for any other method to prevail or continue. I shall take pleasure in using as much of it in the paper as I can.

The Burns programme is unique. It is the finest thing of the kind I have ever seen, and I have seen a great many of them. You only made one mistake in connection with that dinner, which was—that you did not invite the ardent Scot who walks about in my shoes. I should have been very glad to make a journey to Cincinnati had I known there was such a treat in store.

Hoping that you will not forget me the next time, I am,  
with many thanks,

Yours very truly,

ANGUS SINCLAIR.

## LETTER XVIII

### THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

### THE LABOR QUESTION

SINCE the foregoing paper was written some twenty years past much water has run under many bridges. A mighty change has come over the land, and I am amused, almost amazed at my use of the word "tolerate." Nowadays it is the committees who *tolerate* the officials.

Political power today in the Capital of this Nation is in the hands of a labor bureau and although, like the so-called Irish vote of thirty years ago, organized labor represents but a small minority of the total vote of the country, it has been able to influence legislation with an utter disregard of the rights of corporate interests, and quite unmindful of the simple truth that no class in America can be stronger than all Americans. No man, no body of citizens however strong or superior he or they may be, can ever be good enough or wise enough to possess *irresponsible* power over all other citizens. All our public men nevertheless, have pandered to this power; they have been politicians rather than great public servants. I can recall only one notable exception worth recording—a speech made by Mr. Taft during his Presidential campaign in 1907 before a mass meeting of the railroad unions in Chicago. Mr. Roosevelt actually joined one of the brotherhoods

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

as an honorary member. Some wag during the Presidential campaign of 1912 very cleverly hit him off in the following parody:

My country, 'tis of thee,  
Land that is mostly mine,  
    Of thee I yell.  
Land to which I was sent  
By the Omnipotent,  
Make me your President  
    Or go to hell.

\* \* \* \*

Politicians do not trust the people, they only fear them; they are always more afraid of opinion than of the facts and this is why most politicians are more unfit than any other class to preside over the destinies of this nation. The facts can never be changed by opinion and in the end opinion must be changed by the facts. The people want leaders, they must have leaders, and they are willing to listen to and be led by big enough men who will explain a situation to them in terms of sincerity.

\* \* \* \*

No thoughtful man can live today and not realize that the old order is changing and giving place to the new with the rapidity of a changing view. All is in flux, nothing at rest or permanent. The nation faces industrial changes. These changes seem fundamental to many but they are not, for fundamental things do not change. Change is never more than a redistribution of that which never changes. Human nature itself does not change, but its manifestations change. Change is the process of adjusting things that are not fundamental. There is no such thing as finality in the affairs of men.

It may be a species of temporary insanity which directs its madness against the corner-stone of national vitality—the vicious assaults on all accumulations of wealth, legislation by have-nothings against have-somethings have brought about a condition of affairs which chokes real progress of any kind, and if not checked may bring the whole structure of American achievement to ruin. Nothing hurts business so much as political interference. We find ourselves today in a new era, in which statesmen are relegated to the rear and their places taken by demagogues. The people of this country, the substantial and thoughtful men among the working masses, the shopkeepers, the farmers, the employers of labor, the investors of capital great and small who recall the story of the past, see the signs of trouble. Let them unite to avert the tempest.

It is a high price the American people are paying for the iconoclasm that disguises itself under the name of progress. It is an enormous toll that is being exacted for their financial and moral betterment by legislation. Business should be relieved from constant interference, the railroads should be permitted in the interest of efficient public service, nay, they should be *required* to get on a profitable basis; capital should be encouraged to work, and not threatened into idleness. There has been too much anti-trust talk. If independent steel plants can grow up and thrive under the shadow of the United States Steel Corporation, and they can, and they have, there is no trust and there never can be a trust. When the Steel Corporation was formed it probably represented 60 per cent

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

of the iron and steel producing in the United States, and the independent firms 40 per cent. Now these figures are practically reversed.

It is constantly said that the independent concerns have grown up under the "umbrella" of high prices maintained by the Corporation, and this may be or may not be the fact, but it is true that today\* the Corporation is making concessions in prices to meet the figures of other manufacturers in order to keep them out of the Pittsburgh District. So the trust problem solves itself. Railing at trusts has been a favorite trick of politicians in all parties, and yet with all our laws, with all our agitation and with all our dissolutions, we are about where we left off years ago. The controlling factor in the steel business has continued to be, not bonds but intelligence.

\* \* \* \*

No people on earth are more industrious, enterprising and ingenious than our own; none can surpass them in mechanical genius, adaptability, or industrial organization; none can equal them in devising new and successful methods of making and trading; none can excel them in the courage needed to invade and conquer new markets, and they surpass all others in efficiency and initiative. Without government co-operation they can accomplish great things industrially and commercially; they do remarkably well in the face of the disapprobation, distrust and restrictions of National and State authority; but the imagination fails to grasp their ability to thrive if, in addition to their natural advantages, they worked with the same endorsement and encouragement as that freely given by other

\*December, 1913

countries to their industries. It is a fact that there is not a civilized country in the world wherein there exist such handicaps to industry imposed by legislation as those in the United States, or where the spirit of hostility to industrial success shown in the attitude of the governing bodies is so cowardly, intense and vindictive. There is very little difference between the tyranny of a small number of private individuals—call them trusts or any other name—and that imposed by a host of so-called public servants, State or Federal. The rule of the tyrant is tyranny, whether he has one head or many.

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What the railroads of the country need is a sane and practicable treatment by the Government of business questions. That remedy is in a simple positive statesmanship that will apprise business of its powers and limitations, of what it may do and what it may not do. Business wants nothing so much as that the course of its operations shall be clearly laid down for it. Manifestly regulation that regulates, and lets the business men of the country know whether they do right or wrong, is better than suppression that doesn't suppress, and in addition keeps combined business in perpetual doubt as to its rights and powers. Business must be assured that the law of the land is settled and permanent.

Mr. James J. Hill has expressed the opinion that the best thing for American business would be to abolish Congress for ten years. There is an immense amount of wisdom in the suggestion, for unquestionably the financial, industrial and commercial development of the Nation is being greatly retarded by too

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

much legislation, too many sessions of Congress, too frequent meetings of State Legislatures, too much brow-beating of railroads, and altogether too great a disparity between law-making and business-making.

\* \* \* \*

The danger of any form of tyranny comes from the power which it is able to exercise. Unjust governments can be overturned, and employers are merely the medium for establishing economic relations between the laborers they employ and the public they serve. The power of both is, therefore, necessarily limited, but the power of labor itself is practically without limits.\* Men can live without governments or without employers, but they cannot live without labor. When this stupendous power is devoted to evil purposes, the result is tyranny compared to which the acts of the great autocrats of history seem trivial. Tyranny is none the less odious when it doffs the royal ermine and dons the garb of the people. Certain combinations of men have the power to hold up vast systems of transportation, disturb the business of the whole country, and put towns and cities in a state of siege for their daily supplies. Let the demands be just or unjust, the fact remains that here is a power, certainly available for undesired ends, the like of which is not wielded by any employer in the world, and which makes the constitutional power of our government insignificant by comparison. In point of fact labor holds the position of perpetual plaintiff and the employer the position of perpetual defendant. It is a one-sided situation, as the results of our *so-called*

\*The Chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers declares: "I have more power than any one man in the world. In fact I have so much power I am afraid of it."

*arbitration* of wage-scale disputes have abundantly proved. The labor attitude is, "heads I win, tails you lose."

The remedy is not in Congress, but happily governments, while they may work hardships in the established order of industry, cannot enact or repeal economic laws. These are inexorable laws. These are silent forces that move in the industrial channels of least resistance, and neither employer nor worker can change them. You can kill people who are engaged in business, you can destroy business utterly, but you cannot stop those economic and natural laws. A railroad is as much subject to economic law as the corner grocer, it cannot spend more than it earns any more than an individual can, and when circumstances are forced upon it that it must, then very soon it would stop, if under its charter it were lawfully permitted to stop of its own initiative, which it is not, and the arrival of railroads at the vanishing point between income and outgo cannot be long delayed at the present rate. One of the anomalies about it all is that railroads are subjected, with the apparent approval of the political powers that be, to a persistent demand for increased wages, but they are not permitted to raise rates. It is plain that wages cannot be increased unless the income out of which wages are paid is also increased, and it is about time, therefore, for labor to realize that it is not the railroads themselves, but the State Railroad and the Interstate Commerce Commissions with which their struggle for higher wages ultimately lies. There has been no stop to the increase of operating cost partly by legislative power,

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and partly by public opinion not less coercive and deadly.

\* \* \* \*

The constitution of labor unions was at the beginning bitterly contested by men (I confess to being one of them) who now, in theory at least, acknowledge the validity of their principles. And, however wise it may seem that this hostility should have given way in time, it does not follow that the initial check was unsalutary, nor is the surrender an argument of inconsistency. For it should be pretty clear to any one who reads history that a new power of this sort, if without opposition, it were exercised by men with no discipline of experience, would have been subject to great abuses. The injustice and impracticability of many schemes of the unions today, after years of training, show what they might have done to hamper prosperity and retard progress had they been encouraged to organize freely under the first wild compunctions of injustice.

\* \* \* \*

Never be afraid to change your mind. The man who under the influence of more light changes his point of view will see more and see it more clearly, than one who obstinately assumes an attitude, no matter how correct and exalted it may be, and declines to modify it in the face of new and convincing evidence.

\* \* \* \*

How much further are the demands of labor to be carried? This is a difficult question to answer, but it is not difficult to put yourself on the other side of the question, and to see that working men all the world over as their labor grows yearly more mechanical, grow yearly more discontented, more sick of the smooth

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deadly grinding of the mill that, as they think, brings in too little grist for themselves; more determined to convert political power into higher wages, better houses, more food, and an ampler life; more determined that an increasing share of the products of labor shall go to labor. This unrest will go on, keeping pace with the growth of knowledge and self-consciousness, with the restlessness and impatience of the age, with the rise in the price of living, with the progressive occupation of the industrial field by consolidations and combinations of capital whose profits are known to all, and whose operations are *believed, rightly or wrongly*, by them to hinder the employees' chance of rising to independence and prosperity. Few thoughtful men will deny that mankind is growing more dissatisfied as our power over natural resources is extended. Each age has its standard of living, and each successive standard is higher. In ancient times when a man was fed and clothed and protected from the elements, he worked no more. The living wage was just enough to sustain life in a man and his family. That is the origin of the standard of living which lies at the basis of the commerce of succeeding ages. Industry and trade organized themselves on this basis to provide for simple wants and no more. There were degrees of want and degrees of effort, but there was no attempt at a surplus. Crops could not be sold, or stored or transported. When there were goods enough for life, work stopped. There was no thought of production for profit.

The introduction of money\*—the greed for gold with the facilities for exchange altered all this, and is

\*John Stuart Mill.

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the root of existing conditions. Gold could be hoarded and carried, and supplied all things by exchange. When that was discovered, production for use and consumption passed into production for exchange and profit, and trading was the result. Thus we see that the union of the greed of gold with the spirit of enterprise made the modern capitalist, and at this point the unrest of the worker came into being and it has gone on. That is the situation as I see it, and it will continue to go on. How to distribute wealth more equitably, how to make the lives of the ninety and nine more free and spacious, brighter and less precarious—that is the problem of the modern world and time alone can solve it, and the solution will be a matter of growth and not of achievement. There are those who think that it will be solved only when men learn to apply to social and industrial issues the profound truth of Tolstoi's dictum:

“We constantly think that there are circumstances in which a human being can be treated without affection, *and there are no such circumstances.*”

Take hope and aspiration from the heart of man, and you make him a beast of prey. Napoleon understood this. He knew the power of the masses when unbridled and he feared that power and no other, and he never dared to rouse the slumbering lion. He had been an onlooker in 1789. It is that fatal blindness to the real conditions which circumscribe human life that was responsible for the wild theories of the French Revolution and many of its consequent excesses.

You will note that all through my talks to the young engineers in the University of Kentucky the

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burden of my message to them, in season and out of season, has been to study and understand human nature. Men are more important, more interesting and more rewarding subjects of study than things, for nature is stronger than education. If you were to ask me what one factor more than any other originated and brought about the existing labor condition, I would frankly tell you that it was the ignorance and brutality of the men in charge of the employees—men who realized nothing of the force of the human affections. One of the cruellest sins, in giving petty and tyrannous authority into petty and tyrannous hands is that it thus brings into hatred and disgust the true and high authority of moral law.

\* \* \* \*

But even as the railroad official of a generation ago used his power unwisely, so has the labor leader of today pushed, or been impelled by the forces behind him to push the power which organization gives him to extremes—practically to the extent, if not of killing, certainly of exhausting the goose which lays the golden eggs. He has overplayed his hand. This has been done, not altogether nor even primarily, by exorbitant and repeated demands for increased wages, but by tyrannous and frequently unreasonable legislation which the political representatives of labor organizations have been able to force into the statute books, both State and Federal. It is not to the advantage of the whole people that the operation of railroads should be harassed and hampered by politicians merely for political capital. The people cannot prosper without the railroads. The railroads cannot prosper without the people. It is no more possible for the manufac-

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turer to prosper without the railroads than for the railroads to prosper without the manufacturer. Their fortunes as a whole are inseparable. The obvious proposition, therefore, and it is quite elementary, is that the interests of labor are inextricably bound up with the interests of capital and that unless they work together neither can thrive.

It has long been accepted, or at least asserted, that labor gets one-fifth the value of manufactured products and capital four-fifths. This statement will not hold water because it is based on the assumption that the gross revenue of a railroad or manufacturing industry is the measure of the wealth produced. This is quite misleading. Out of his four-fifths the manufacturer must provide raw material. What does raw material represent? Mr. William McConway\* answered this question by saying that when the particular line of steel in which he was interested reached the market its average value approximated sixty dollars per ton. The material entering into the production of that ton when in the ground costs about three dollars. All the rest is wages, and a very moderate return for capital, when capital gets it. The manufacturer must also meet rent, taxes, depreciation, insurance, advertising and all the other items which are known generally as "overhead." If an accurate census could be taken of the amount of wages paid in the United States it would beyond question show a total infinitely in excess of the amount of profits and interest earned by capital. In addition thereto the share of labor is assured. It is a preferred claim. You can "pass" a dividend but you cannot "pass" wages and taxes.

\*The honored head of the McConway Torley Co. of Pittsburgh.

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Public sentiment will change. Even now the pendulum has begun to swing the other way. The power of organized labor is forcing another power into action. The money power of the world is being organized, is being forced to organize. Business men nationally and internationally are drawing together.

\* \* \* \*

The weak spot in the armor of labor organizations is that they *are not responsible*. If they break an agreement, the party of the other part has no redress. If a railroad or a manufacturer breaks a labor agreement, he is immediately confronted with a stoppage of operations. This is a phase of the world-labor issue which its leaders persistently ignore. Labor unions do not take themselves and their relations to the world of industry seriously. They forget the public. *They are not responsible*; they forget that men are successful just in the degree that they are responsible. Business men who are not responsible are immediately ejected from the business world, and what is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the gander.

The banker, the railroad president must be responsible, he must carry out his contracts; but the president of a labor order does not so regard, or is not always permitted to so regard his contracts, therefore he is *not responsible*. This in effect amounts to the right of a favored class to break the law. Let a capitalist cause damage to your pocket or your person, and you can reach him through the courts and compel him to make good to you as much of the injury as can be estimated in dollars and cents; but from the wage earner who has no assets subject to levy you are

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unprotected, except by his realization of his duty and his desire to do it. There is much need to get together on this point and great room for it and intelligent labor leaders owe to themselves the duty of taking it under the most grave consideration.

\* \* \* \*

The innocent holder of bonds and stocks, if our government is to mean anything, has plainly some rights which neither side can honestly afford to disregard. *That is the proposition.* It must be remembered that the public is the silent and suffering partner in most industrial disputes. A railroad has no money of its own. Its officers are merely trustees for the stock-holders. The president of a railroad is elected to do certain things. A railroad conductor is employed to do certain things, and it is begging the question to point to bad railway financing, to excessive or even fraudulent, if you please, bond or stock issues of the past. Some railroad directors may have been in on stock deals; some conductors may have been in on cash fares. But the vital point that the investor must be protected, and can only be protected by *responsible* people still remains.

\* \* \* \*

Take the insistence of that *once conservative body*, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, on the seniority rule. If the name of an engineman appears at the head of a service list, his eyesight may be dimmed, his hearing affected, his judgment impaired, but he must be chosen in preference to a better qualified man who has been a less time in the service. No law of morals or equity can sustain that attitude.

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There can be no escape from the fact that labor owes a duty to society no less than does capital. In the heat of the argument against trusts and combinations, labor's responsibilities seem to be forgotten. The responsibilities of labor to the public, the investing public who furnish the sinews of war, are quite as large and vital as those of the bankers and railroad and industrial presidents who represent the investor. They realize that the welfare of the country depends on universal steady productive labor fairly paid for; but the unions, as at present constituted, hold that the less one works the better, with an utter disregard of the interests of the owners of the property or of any third party with whom the employer may have contracts yet unfulfilled.

\* \* \* \*

Every business man sees that the control of the world's political and social power and the redistribution of the world's possessions and opportunities are being fought for in every civilized country. He sees that the present economic order pits producer against consumer, worker against employer, and that our social order suffers from many other serious defects. The spokesmen of labor without being able, in a large way, to clearly or definitely formulate their demands, are asking insistently for a redistribution of money, opportunity, privilege and power. They see vast sums of money withdrawn year after year from the service of social reform and they raise a protest. They say:

"If you have this money, which after all is largely our money, to spend, spend it on us. Make the lives of the ninety and nine more spacious and comfortable. Give us more of the leisure and the

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amenities that have hitherto been reserved only for an insignificant fraction of mankind. ‘Social Justice,’ they say, ‘should come first. Law is the machinery for its realization and is vital only as it expresses and embodies it.’”

They assert that no policy which holds the rights of property superior to those of the rights of the great mass of laboring humanity can be just, and it is well to recognize that these two principles have stood face to face from the beginning of time and they will ever so continue—the strong man’s craving for power and the poor man’s craving for food. Many thinking men will tell you that there never can be industrial peace until the worker participates in the profits of industry to the extent that he may enjoy more of the amenities as well as the necessities of life.

Thus we see that both labor and capital have come to realize the slenderness of the barrier between industrial activity and industrial chaos.

\* \* \* \*

As it appears today the power of the world is coming into the hands of the masses, into the hands of our employees. They outnumber us fifty or a hundred to one, and therefore this new power of the masses would portend loss of power to us, were it not for the fact that this new power of the masses must, in turn, also have leadership—*responsible* leadership. We must have leaders. Someone must lead in popular matters. In nature we have the bell-wether, the queen bee, and so in economics as well as in politics we must find the fairest and best mode of leading the masses of the people. In this respect there could be no nobler calling than the pursuit which we call politics. No one can

object to a combination of workingmen formed for the purpose of maintaining their rights and resisting oppression. On the contrary it may be said that the fundamental idea of trades unionism is today almost universally approved. No one objects to high wages *fairly earned*. It is only when they overstep this idea that they arouse public hostility. The enemies labor unions have to fear most are the leaders they choose to represent them.

A mass without wise, strong and capable leadership is a mob doomed to defeat, and it will come to be seen that the business men must be the leaders of this new power. It is true that it does not at once seem practically possible that the masses of our employees will turn to us, their employers, for leadership. But business men are beginning to see, and our employees are beginning to see, and we shall both soon see clearly, that most of the questions and problems we have been fighting about are problems of the trade and the business—common problems—whose best solution is the task of the employer and employee working together. We shall both see that high wages and good profits are natural affinities, as are good working conditions and successful business. The modern employer has learned that what used to be termed humanity is but good business; he knows that he cannot abuse his work people and expect the best returns; that the human machine which is in the best condition, which depends not alone on physical health but genuine contentment with its work and treatment, is the most efficient; he knows that the human being will do only his best work if it is for his own benefit.

It is a self-evident truth that the underlying causes of industrial unrest must be frankly recognized before we can reach remedies which are constructive, and both capital and labor must abandon all selfish and discriminatory demands before peace resolutions will be seriously regarded. There is danger in the type of man who would wreck anything for his own benefit. Such men exist at both extremes—the employer who would pay less than the moral wage, and the man who would extort more than the moral wage by duress. Add to these two classes looking for mercenary profits, the thousands of otherwise good citizens who fail from ignorance, or incapacity or indifference to public duty to make their influence felt on such issues. What we need is a great amnesty that will insure a forgetting of old misunderstandings. We need confidence in each other's actions and motives. We need to abandon suspicion and distrust. We need a quickened public opinion, for our salvation depends largely on public opinion. Than an enlightened public opinion there is no more mighty force. Obnoxious as the newspaper reporter may sometimes be in his activities he is undoubtedly a power for good. The evil worker, the labor demagogue, the irregular promoter and the shady politician have a wholesome respect for him because he is the medium by which public opinion is directed to them.

\* \* \* \*

It will come to be seen that business men are the natural leaders. It will be found that the principal things that our businesses need, the masses of our employees need also. Good housing, good transportation, good recreation facilities, good education that

really fits men for their life's work and for their living, well governed cities, justice and security for property—these are the things our employees need most, and these are the things our railroads and our businesses need most, if they are not to be taken over by the Government at the behest of the masses of our employees, or if they are not to be stopped or killed by the constant friction and strikes that are always present when employees are badly housed, or badly prepared for life. These are the things they will use their power to get; and to get them they will use us as leaders *as soon as they recognize that our enlightened self-interest wants these things too.* Industrial peace is bound to come. It will come when, and not before both parties have sufficient *self-interest* to see that their *mutual interest* lies in getting together. Some means must be found for both sides to get together, not primarily as employer and employee but as citizens of a common country—as a whole people who desire peace and not war. There must be a marriage of capital and labor—there must be a get-along-together spirit like a good husband and wife get along. Dreams much more fantastic have been realized. The spirit of a nobler manhood is slowly possessing the heart of humanity. This is idealism you will say and quite possibly you may be right, but do not lose sight of the cardinal truth that the one path of progress that most concerns our nation is *progress in idealism.* We must be prepared spiritually as well as materially.

\* \* \* \*

Just when or how this vision will crystallize into working shape and become a basis for content and

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further advancement, it would be rash for me to attempt to speculate, but I do say that it can only mean great good. It cannot come until the conflicting interests recognize that the rights of others cannot be left out of consideration, "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind"\*\* must be shown. It cannot come until the intelligent and thoughtful men among the working masses get the simple fact clearly fixed in their minds that a demagogue never filled a pay envelope.

It is unthinkable that the sober-minded, self-respecting working men of this country will accept the alternative leadership offered by men who declare that *there is only one flag for us and that is the red flag*—that they would take such a fatal step as to join themselves to any party that does not carry the flag and march to the music of the Union. It would be surprising indeed if they abandoned the ideals upon which this nation was founded and gave their consent to such treasonable doctrine. Surely the national spirit has not deserted the masses of our people. Not at all, that spirit is here as ever but it does appear as if it had been lulled into sleep by the blandishments of false prophets. The true American spirit is still here and that spirit is the rock to smite, and at the touch of the rod it will yield in inexhaustible degree common sense, reason, patriotism and progress. The spirit of American traditions must be reawakened to expel false ideals. There must be a well defined line of cleavage between those who repudiate all government and denounce the flag, and those who are committed to the defense of their country's sacred symbol and who look in confidence to it for protection in working out our industrial

\*The Declaration of Independence.

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problems. Any organization that makes a cornerstone of the proposition that "labor is slavery" cannot permanently endure in this country. In no other place since the world began has labor been so free and so splendidly rewarded as in the United States.

Under the new conditions the leadership of political and social power must go to those accustomed and trained by their daily work to take the initiative, and more important still to those who best understand, and most practically sympathize with the new found power of the masses whose support is fundamentally essential to a degree never before realized in the world's history. The successful business man must have that understanding. The man of affairs in the future will evolve from the business man of today in the same manner that he was born, by imperceptible degrees, each of them the result of the step before, and the prophetic factor of the next step ahead—able responsible men,\* who can win the sympathy and who can guide and lead large numbers of working men, are the ones who will command the capital and the business opportunities of the world henceforth as the new conditions evolve.

So we must organize for our leadership, and this organization must be thorough and inclusive, must be little and big, must be local and national and international. If business men nationally and internationally can reach a common understanding there is no power, political or social, that can withstand them, for they are *responsible*.

\* \* \* \*

\*I could not name two better examples of the type of man I have in mind than Mr. C. M. Schwab and Mr. A. L. Humphrey.

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

Let us sweep away tradition and prejudice. Let the Labor policy be based on *maximum* not *minimum* output. Let Labor be ungrudging in output and Capital ungrudging in wages. The question *must be solved*, not preached at, and it will be solved or we must confess ourselves a nation spiritually bankrupt. And it will be solved some day by wits more weighty perhaps, and more nimble than mine, but we must keep at it, and nationally we must keep in the front rank. It is not a flattering fact that in both Canada and Australia they are a step ahead of us in the solution of this the greatest social problem confronting modern times.

## LETTER XIX

### THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

DURING my time on the *Big Four Railroad* I had many pleasant associations. One of my friends of those days, a man of whom I have the most affectionate and grateful recollection, and whose friendship I cherish as something precious, is Mr. Joseph Ramsey,\* who at the period herein referred to was general manager of the road. No man ever had a purer heart. His rule of life has been that the sweetest happiness we ever know, the very wine of human life comes, not from love but from sacrifice—from the effort to make others happy.

\* \* \* \*

Another of my *Big Four* associates was old Joe Moses, previously referred to. He occupied a unique position due altogether to his own personality, a position which neither fortune nor social prestige could have conferred. He was the sort of person you respected because he commanded your respect. He was the sort of person you might have expected to wear a tall silk hat and quite possibly he never owned one. He had what some one has called the “silk hat mind” and that is a very real thing, although like many other realities it is not easy to define in a sentence. Anyhow, he was always accurate and responsible, and everybody

\*Afterward president, Wabash R. R.

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believed in him and no one was ever fooled by him. You felt that he was a wise old owl, but a perfectly honest one. From the president of the road down he was loved and trusted. No rule applied to Joe Moses, social or otherwise. He was simply "all wool and a yard wide," and we were all his friends.

\* \* \* \*

Joe's father was an Englishman by birth and after the legal period of residence in Cincinnati he had taken out papers of citizenship. The first time he went to the polls he was challenged:

"You cannot vote here," said the judge of election, "you are not naturalized."

"Not naturalized!" said old Moses, "I am naturalized, civilized and *circumcised*."

\* \* \* \*

Politics are said to have been very corrupt in those days, more so than now. That is difficult to understand for they still smell to heaven.

\* \* \* \*

There is another story and it is too good to forget. Mamma went one afternoon to call on General and Mrs. Kilpatrick, of Springfield. They were out, and one of the maids was sitting on the front porch entertaining her beau. Mamma left cards and as she started to go this pert maid said:

"Mrs. Gibson this is Mr. Blank."

Mamma halted for a second, and said:

"Oh, indeed!" \* \* \* \*

Mamma had a sewing woman when you were little and told her among other things she wanted some pajamas made for you.

LETTERS TO MY SON

"Oh no ma'am, no indeed ma'am, I couldn't do that. *I'm no hand at the cooking!*"

\* \* \* \*

We had an assistant stationmaster at Cincinnati, Mike Clark, a good-natured, bright, efficient Irishman. He wore a full and usually unkempt beard which was the subject of many jokes. Two coaches filled with Federal prisoners, bound for Columbus penitentiary, were standing in the station ready to be attached to an outgoing train. It was hot weather and the coach windows were open. One of the prisoners, seeing Mike hustling around, hailed him. Mike approached the coach and, looking up to the man at the open window, asked what was wanted.

"Say, Cap," said the prisoner, "how much would you charge me for a pipefull of them whiskers?"

\* \* \* \*

There is a companion of that period of whom I have the kindest recollection. He is now living the quiet life of a country gentleman in Virginia. I refer to Mr. Andrew Stevenson, an old friend. We had been on the *Queen and Crescent* in former years, and were on the *Big Four* and afterwards on the *Baltimore and Ohio* together in later years. At the period of which I write he was general agent of the *Nickel Plate* fast freight line, and he was always a welcome companion on my frequent trips over the division. On one of these occasions we stopped at the town of Mechanicsburg, at which the station agent was one Mr. Pat Tully, an old and most respectable Irishman, not too heavily endowed with the wit credited to his race.

Competition between the fast freight lines was very keen, and the routing of "unconsigned" business

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was largely in the hands of the local agent. I introduced Mr. Stevenson to Tully and said about the *Nickel Plate* line all that official propriety and even old friendship permitted, and perhaps more—probably much more.

Whereupon Mr. Stevenson, addressing Tully, said: "Mr. Tully, quite a large quantity of wool originates in your district and some of it is unconsigned."

"Oh, yes sir," said Tully, "and it's *all unconsigned*."

"Now," said Andrew, smiling, "suppose a farmer hauled in tomorrow, fifteen or twenty bales and gave no direction, how would you consign it?"

"Well," said Tully promptly, "*I guess I would send it by Merchants' Dispatch!*"

\* \* \* \*

We had an engineman, and a good-natured, fat old Irishman\* he was, Mike Ranehan. He was on a local freight and it happened that I had reason to investigate what looked like needless delays in getting over the road. It developed that there was so much to do at this place, and so much at that place and so much at the other. But the conductor hesitated about the delay at a given place, saying he had rather Mike would explain that. Turning to Mike, the trainmaster, Tom English, as good a soul as ever drew breath, now a comfortable, well-to-do ranchman in California, said: "Ranehan, what have you got to offer?"

"Well," drawled Mike, "when we get there it's usually about 9:30, and by that time I need a little something to stay my stomach. So I go over to a house near the station and get a little bite to eat—

\*Note the number of Irishmen. They were mostly of the second crop and their fathers had been employed in the construction of the railroad.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

about a dozen soft-boiled eggs in a celery glass, and some bread and a few quarts of buttermilk, and it sort of keeps me going until lunch time, but that is the only delay I'm responsible for!" I have since been told Ranehan is dead. John Barleycorn can prove an alibi in his case, but God forgive *Cadmus*.

\* \* \* \*

At the time I took charge of the Cincinnati Division it was in rotten shape, as many men, my good friend Ed Peck for example, will well remember. By the way he is quite an old friend of yours, for when you were a mere infant he took you in his arms from your old nurse who nearly had a fit, and set you down at the dispatcher's table where he was working, and if you should ever develop into a railroad man it will do you no harm to remember where and when you got your start.

In November 1891 the following appeared in a Cincinnati newspaper, and you should not have great difficulty in recognizing yourself.

### BULLY FOR BILLY

For many years it has been the vest-pocket ambition of Superintendent Billy Gibson of the *Big Four*, to own a red-headed boy in fee simple. On Saturday last his urgent desire was granted. The young gentleman is, at present, exceedingly bald, but everything indicates that before long he will have the most intense auburn head that ever auburned. We congratulate—that is to say, we rejoice with—William on his well-earned success. The heir—now quite apparent—will in all probability be named William Robert Burns Joseph Moses Gibson. The latest bulletin says that Billy and the boy are bully, and that the happy father is doing as well as could be expected under the circumstances.

\* \* \* \*



THE HEIR — NOW QUITE APPARENT



About this time we had a switchmen's strike in Springfield yard, and like most troubles of its kind in those days it was brought about by the activity of one agitator, and I was kept fully advised as to what was going on in their "division room." Grievance after grievance was presented and finally they handed out their real demand to the effect that they would not work any longer under the General Yardmaster, John C. Carney—that he was "crowding" them all the time and, in short, that he was a tyrant. I told them that Mr. Carney had been on the road all his life, and his father before him, and that their proposition could not be considered and that I would not discuss it. We thought that would be the last of it but it was not. They went out at noon the following day.

The trouble dragged along, and Mr. Van Winkle, the general superintendent, appeared on the scene. He went on to say that the New York people were after the president, Mr. Ingalls, and that he had no choice in the matter and that peace must be patched up at any price and at once. I said, "Mr. Van, do you mean that I must discharge Carney?" He said, "Yes, that is exactly what my orders are, and I think just as much of Carney as you do and I have known him longer, and I agree with you, but there are my orders." That broke my heart, and I said, "Mr. Van, if we surrender to these people and discharge Carney, my successor will have to do it, I could not."

Mr. Ingalls had an old-fashioned notion that when anything went wrong no cure could be quite complete unless somebody was discharged. Like so many rail-

## LETTERS TO MY SON

road men of the period he never figured on the cost in time and money and moral effect of reckless hiring and firing. No human mind can grasp the awful price railroads have paid for that single phase of human short-sightedness.

Mr. Van Winkle left Springfield that day and most generously left the question *in statu quo*, and it would have hurt him to give in. I knew where he stood, but I did not know where Mr. Ingalls stood; nobody ever knew that on a question of policy; he was not a communicative person. But almost providentially the switchmen sent a representative to me that same afternoon to ask if I would receive a committee—that they wished to make a proposition to call off the strike. To this I replied that I would meet them provided the proposition was to call off the strike *unconditionally*. This was agreed to and the affair was ended.

\* \* \* \*

That was a turning-point in my life, as there was no alternative but to stick to my guns. Every man on the division was watching the issue and there was no middle ground for me, but this can be recorded that there has been no strike in that yard since, not even in 1894, the Debs year, and that John Carney is general yardmaster there to this present day.\* It is experiences like this that try men out. After all it is trials that make men, even as the northern blast lashes men into Vikings.

The loyal support I got from English and Peck† through that trying time is beyond all praise, and when

\*1913

†Mr. Peck is now general superintendent, B. & O. R. R., Pittsburgh.

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

I left the road it was no small gratification to me to see English appointed my successor.

\* \* \* \*

During the strike of the American Railway Union in 1894, better known as the Debs strike, because Eugene V. Debs was its president, the representative of the union in charge of the strike in the Cincinnati district was one Phelan. This man was a violent agitator, and not content with urging employees in their meeting hall to leave the service, he harangued groups of them in the yards and on the streets to carry on a campaign of violence, and to defy the police when the latter interfered with these unlawful gatherings. Peaceful requests and warnings were of no avail and it was decided to appeal to the Federal Court for an order restraining Phelan and others from attempting to disturb the peace—in other words an injunction. The application was made by Mr. C. E. Schaff\* then assistant general manager, representing the railroad, and I was one of the principal witnesses. Judge W. H. Taft heard the evidence and promptly caused the injunction to be issued. Phelan, however, disregarded the order of the court and was immediately arrested and locked up. This I believe was one of the earliest uses of the injunction in connection with labor agitation and it had a most wholesome effect, although it brought down the wrath of organized labor on Mr. Taft's head, and it was to answer his critics in this connection that he delivered his splendid and spirited speech in 1907 before a mass meeting of the railroad labor unions in Chicago. This speech I have already commented on.

\* \* \* \*

\*Now president M. K. & T. Railroad.

In the earlier days, before the consolidation in 1888, Mr. Ingalls had operated the original property in a "one man power" way, and for a long period of years prior to that time his immediate personal staff did not consist of especially brilliant men—indeed such men were not necessary, and in any case the system was not calculated to develop men. Men are developed by placing responsibility upon them. So it came to pass when the *Big Four* system evolved, Mr. Ingalls found it necessary to invite to his aid men of knowledge and experience from other roads, and the most conspicuous of them were Mr. Oscar G. Murray and Mr. Joseph Ramsey. There can be no question that Mr. Ingalls was arbitrary and not an easy person for any one to get along with. Perhaps one exception to this rule, and he was a striking exception, was Mr. C. E. Schaff. He listened to Schaff and kept his hands off to an extent he did with no one else. Mr. Ingalls was in Europe during the Debs strike of 1894, which all concerned thought was a blessing, and Schaff handled a difficult situation in a masterly manner, and this would have been quite impossible had he been interfered with.

Mr. Ingalls was native of Maine, a graduate of Harvard and a member of the bar. He spent practically all of his life in Cincinnati and it would be difficult to name any of his contemporaries who did anything like as much for the material growth of the community as he did, with the one possible exception of Mr. E. A. Ferguson, who projected the *Cincinnati Southern Railway* and saw it into successful operation. Mr. Ingalls built the *Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad* into



MR. C. E. SCHAFF



## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

Cincinnati, and the amalgamation of the railroads which now constitute the *Big Four* system was the result of his imagination and achievement.

Officially my relations with Mr. Ingalls were always cordial and sympathetic and personally agreeable. He actively interested himself in the educational, musical and artistic uplift of the people of his adopted city.

After Mr. Taft had retired from the White House to private life I happened to spend an afternoon with him on the *Pennsylvania* limited, and he seemed greatly interested in talking over those exciting days and other days in Cincinnati. He spoke most kindly of Mr. Murray and Mr. Schaff and particularly enquired about "that little boy." When I told him you were at Harvard Law School he remarked that you "couldn't do better."

\* \* \* \*

One of the characters of Springfield, Ohio, where my office was then located, was Mr. John Kinnan, the merchant prince of the town, and he was a witty, whole-souled, generous Irishman. He took me to a wake one night and the house was very much crowded. He seemed to know everybody present. Addressing one fat old Irishwoman who was standing, he said:

"I'm afraid you will get tired with nothing to sit on."

"Ah, indade," said the lady, "I've plenty to sit on, but *nowhere to put it*."

\* \* \* \*

Father Murphy, a good old priest in Springfield, and I were great friends, and he was quite a wit. Meeting one of our trainmen he said:

LETTERS TO MY SON

"Ah, Brassel, did you go to mass this morning?"

"I did not."

"Ah, is it reading your Bible you've been?"

"I have not."

"Well, begob, if you ever go to heaven, Brassel, it's a great laugh you'll have at us."

\* \* \* \*

The following letters are reliques of the period:

THE CLEVELAND, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO & ST. LOUIS RAILROAD  
M. E. INGALLS, President

WILLIAM GIBSON, Esq. Cincinnati, Ohio, March 22, 1894.  
Superintendent, Springfield, Ohio

Dear Sir: I have yours of the 21st and your showing is marvellously good. It is highly creditable to your divisions.

Yours very truly, (Signed) M. E. INGALLS.

THE CLEVELAND, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO & ST. LOUIS RAILROAD  
OSCAR G. MURRAY, First Vice President

MR. WILLIAM GIBSON, Superintendent Cincinnati, Ohio.  
Springfield, Ohio

Dear Sir: While all of our superintendents and the operating department generally, are working very closely and nicely with the freight department, our traffic representatives speak so nicely about your full and hearty co-operation with them and the many little things you do unsolicited to promote the business, that I want to personally thank you for your kindness and for your efforts in our behalf. It is all in the same pocket and for the same cause, but I feel you have done a great many things that were not absolutely called for by your official position, and it is a great pleasure for me to say to you that they are wholly and entirely appreciated. I shall be glad to reciprocate whenever I have the opportunity. Yours very truly,

Sept. 26, 1895. OSCAR G. MURRAY.

Not the least of Mr. Murray's gifts is a keen sense of humor. He has a genial and charming personality, and his kindly disposition makes him beloved of men. I was with him on the night express leaving Cincinnati on one occasion and he looked at me across the car and said:





MR. M. E. INGALLS

## THE BIG FOUR RAILROAD

"Bill, do you ever take a drink?"

"Why, Mr. Murray, I was never known to refuse."

Of course the conventional thing would have been for me to assume a Heepian air and tell a barefaced falsehood. Anyhow the old man had a hearty laugh. Poor old Tillinghast, who was present, nearly fell off his chair.

\* \* \* \*

There is a similar story of the same period. Mr. Ramsay, the general manager, sent for me and asked me to suggest a man for a certain position about to become vacant. Without hesitation I said, "George Burns."

"Oh yes," Mr. Ramsay said, "I know Burns and he is a splendid man, but doesn't he drink a little?"

"Why no, Mr. Ramsay, he doesn't drink half as much as I do!"

Burns was promptly appointed.

\* \* \* \*

The Mr. Carney before referred to was a dry character. He had the usual quiver full of arrows and more arriving. Someone remarked that he had lost count, a new one seemed to be coming every Saturday night.

Mrs. Carney had advertised for a servant maid and when an applicant arrived Carney was sitting on the porch.

"Is this the Carneys?"

"Yes, what can we do for you?"

"I'm the maid that come after the place but I hear you have too many children."

"Oh! don't let a little thing like that bother you," said Carney, "anything to suit you. We can drown three or four of them!"

## LETTER XX

### LEAVE CINCINNATI

**W**HEN Mr. Oscar G. Murray, then co-receiver with the Hon. John K. Cowen, of the *Baltimore and Ohio R. R.* in 1896, and Mr. Wm. M. Greene, general manager for them invited me to Baltimore, I was assigned to the duties of assistant general superintendent at that point.

Before leaving Cincinnati a few old friends and associates made me their guest at dinner, the record of which I give as it appeared in the newspaper the morning following:

The tribute that was paid to William Gibson last evening by his friends was of the kind that makes a man believe that all people in this cold world are not selfish or hard-hearted. For a number of years Billy Gibson, as superintendent of the Cincinnati Division of the *Big Four*, went quietly about his business, making friends and a reputation as a railroad man. By and by, W. M. Greene was made general manager of the *B. & O.*, and recently he called his old aide, Billy Gibson, to help him restore the great *B. & O.* to its pristine glory and proper place among the trunk lines.

It was because Billy Gibson was a good fellow and worthy of any man's friendship that he was given a farewell banquet at the Gibson House last evening. Fully eighty sat down to one of the best menus that has been served in this town in many a day. The table

## LEAVE CINCINNATI

was profusely decorated with flowers and the air of friendship and good cheer that prevailed was worthy an Easter morn.

### SAXBY PRESIDES

Howard Saxby presided as toastmaster, and after the cigars, gave forth the following words:

It is customary in Cincinnati to appreciate a man thoroughly after he has made up his mind to move away.

We generally show our regard on these auspicious occasions by giving him something to eat for a change.

This we consider the thing to do, because he can't ask us to "eat up and have another."

We assembled here tonight to bid Godspeed to one of the best fellows it was ever my good fortune to know. I was both glad and sorry when I learned that our friend, Billy Gibson, was going to leave us. Glad that he was going to fill a more exalted position, and sorry to lose one of the very few men whose friendship I really cherish.

He leaves with the good will and best wishes of every man with whom he has ever come in contact.

If he prefers oysters to Springfield, why that is his own lookout.

The State of Ohio creates good men, and then the other States entice them away. With McKinley going to the White House, Senator Foraker in Washington, and Billy Gibson in Baltimore, we can but thank God that we have Joe Moses still left, and the Lord knows how soon he may get a call to start a new railroad in Jerusalem.

Mr. Gibson's advancement is simply the fulfilment of the Scriptural words, "Go up, thou baldhead!"

We are not going to have any set speeches tonight—all those who speak will stand up like men.

And now all that remains for me to say is that there is not a man here tonight who does not offer you sincere congratulations, and while we are more than sorry that you are going to leave us, we only hope that the new friends you will make may be as sincere and true as those you are leaving behind.

We have enjoyed your cheerful company many a time and oft, many a hearty laugh have we had together, and we are better for having known you.

You will leave behind you fond recollections. You take with you every good wish for your future happiness and prosperity.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

We will see you in your Eastern home on our way to Europe (during our summer vacations), knowing full well that "a Scotchman will always shak' us by the hand and gi' us a hearty welcome."

Fill your glasses, boys, and join me in drinking health, long life and prosperity to Billy Gibson.

Amid great applause Mr. Gibson arose and started his response. He plainly showed his emotion and appreciation of an honor that any man would be proud of. He said:

### GIBSON CAN TALK

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:—It has been remarked in this city, of late years, that each winter season produces a greater amount of after-dinner speaking than the one that went before it.

You have no doubt noticed that no sooner are the early frosts of winter felt, and the leaves begin to fall from the trees, than pearls of great price begin to fall from the lips of the wise men of the East and North, and of the West and the South; yea, even the wise men of Mt. Auburn, Hartwell and Clifton. Whenever a few of us gather together for social, business or political purposes, we are sure to make speeches at each other. Free silver may come and gold may go, but talking goes on forever. On the present occasion, which has been created by your kindness, I venture to express the hope, therefore, that no one will succumb to the weight of my remarks; indeed my inclination is not in the direction of talking; on the contrary, my breath is completely taken away, and in the presence of this goodly company, I feel dumb as the proverbial Baltimore oyster.

Speech making, for a number of years, has been with me a sort of mild pastime, but when it comes to attempting a speech under circumstances like the present, it is quite a different matter, and my first impulse is to exclaim in the words of "Tiny Tim"—"God bless us every one," and then subside into silence.

I have always thought that the greatest privilege which the Maker vouchsafed to me was to be born a Scotsman, and if my friend Dr. Graydon will permit me I would like to borrow a remark he made on a recent occasion. I wish to use his words, because I can not furnish better, to make an acknowledgment which I owe to my friends, and to myself, to make. He said: "America is a stepmother that takes as good care of her step-children as of her own."

In my sojourn of nearly sixteen years among you, I have learned to love Cincinnati. I have watched her growth in that

## LEAVE CINCINNATI

time, and in my own humble way, have endeavored to push that growth along. I have learned to love her hills and her suburbs. I have become familiar with her well-kept and well-paved streets, of which my honored friend, Mayor Caldwell, is so justly proud. I have learned to look with affection upon even her soot and her smoke. To me they are the purest white.

When I come back to visit my friends here, I shall have the greatest sympathy with the English sailor, who had been cruising under the blue skies of the Mediterranean for three years. His ship was ordered home, and as they sailed up the Thames in a dense November fog, he exclaimed to one of his shipmates, "Thank God, we have got some decent weather at last; no more of your damned blue skies for me."

## LOVES THE BIG FOUR

I have felt myself a part of the *Big Four Railroad*. Who could be a member of the *Big Four* official family, as I have been since the newer and greater *Big Four* has been created; who could follow that leader who guides the destinies of the *Big Four*; who could be associated with him, in no matter how humble a capacity, without kindling at his example and catching at least a spark of his enthusiasm and his energy? My passport to Baltimore, and to the *Baltimore & Ohio Railroad*, shall be that I hail from Ohio, and that I have served under Melville E. Ingalls.

It is impossible for me to look around these tables without feeling a retrospect of memories that almost throws a momentary shade over the smiling face of the future. I confess that I felt somewhat nervous about entering a new field. We have all gone swimming, and every bather knows that the first plunge of the season is an awkward affair, even if he is not a novice, and so it is only natural that I should experience a certain timidity at making a plunge into a stream of new surroundings and new associations. But I go equipped, at least, with a reasonable amount of native caution, seasoned by a dash of your Ohio energy. Between them I venture to hope that I shall not be a discredit, either to my new friends or to the older and tried friends who now surround me like a troop of brothers.

It is not necessary to say it, for it goes without saying, that I regret to leave this beautiful city; that I regret to leave my friends and neighbors; that I regret to leave my brother officials, with all of whom my relations have been so cordial. It is not necessary to say that I regret to leave my men, to whose unwavering devotion I owe so much. Mr. Chairman, I can say no more—I could say no less.

## LETTERS TO MY SON

But Baltimore has its advantages. Not the least is that Baltimore is in Maryland and Maryland is a State where good Democrats do not have to apologize for their politics. Baltimore is near Washington. If an Ohio man gets homesick in Baltimore, he can take the *B. & O.* to Washington. He can not make a mistake. He will find a brother Buckeye holding office in every Federal building.

As some of my friends might express it, I have been "called to a greater sphere of usefulness." Man hungers not alone for immortal manna. Man desires when he dies to leave behind him something more than merely a good name; something that will not only surround his deathbed with anxious relations, but which, when he is no more, will make everything which belongs to him dear to them. There is also another benign consolation. The money which he has hoarded and scraped together will become a golden ointment to the lacerated heart of his disconsolate widow. It may even be the means of destroying the solitude of her fireside and of filling his vacant chair with some sighing, sympathizing, single gentleman.

### WHY HE GOES AWAY

I go to Baltimore, therefore, in the hope that I may wake up some morning and discover the long-delayed money bags under my hitherto impoverished pillow.

As I have said, I regret to leave my friends. To particularize would be to detain you all night. But I betray no secret when I tell you that among a host of others, among a host of whole-souled men—men whom I am proud to call friends—I betray no secret, when I tell you that I regret to leave Howard Saxby. Not only is Saxby a fellow of infinite jest; not only is he a finished toastmaster; he is also a thirty-third degree roastmaster. But he is much more. He is what neither money nor place can create. Howard Saxby belongs to the old school. We are told in the books something to the effect that what is worth having is hard to get. That is the reason, I suppose, that it took me a long time to know Saxby. I did not know him until after many introductions. I think it was the sixth time of asking. You see, we doubled the number of banns for certainty's sake. Then after knowing him, I believe he must have imitated Prince Hal with Falstaff and given me medicines to make me love him.

Gentlemen, it is not possible for me to attempt to express, even in a feeble way, my deep sense of the great kindness with which you have overwhelmed me. On that point, I am all heart and no lips. I may say that your kindness fills me with a pride which is akin to the deepest humility. I thank you from the

## LEAVE CINCINNATI

very bottom of my heart for the kindly and graceful, but far too generous compliment which you have paid me. A thousand times in one, I thank you.

A number of letters of regret were read, and the following have been preserved:

### THE WABASH BUILDING ST. LOUIS

My dear Sir:

It is with sincere regret that I find I will be unable to attend the dinner in honor of my friend Billy Gibson.

I will be with you however in spirit if not in the flesh, and will rejoice with you and his other friends in his deserved advancement.

I have requested Mr. Burns to say all I might have said, had I been present at the dinner, and I have no doubt he will say it (and much more) better than I could do myself.

Wishing the guest of the evening a long, happy and prosperous career, and all of you a happy and pleasant time, I remain.

Very truly yours,

To A. Telford, Chairman

J. RAMSEY, JR.

My dear Sir:

It is a matter of much personal disappointment that I cannot be present at the banquet to be given in honor of Mr. William Gibson.

It was my expectation to have united in this expression of regard, but I find that I cannot do so without much inconvenience to others.

My friendship with Mr. Gibson long since ripened into intimacy.

He now has a great opportunity and I am sure that he will greatly fill it.

Faithfully,

Mr. Alex. Telford,  
Cincinnati, Ohio

SAMUEL F. HUNT

ST. EDWARDS CHURCH  
REV. M. L. MURPHY

Residence, 42 Wesley Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio

Sept. 2, 1896.

WILLIAM GIBSON, Esq., Baltimore, Md.

My dear kind friend:

I wish you every blessing and good luck in your new sphere of life on the *B. & O. Road.* You have been a general favorite

## LETTERS TO MY SON

in Springfield and I hope and trust you will be equally so in Baltimore.

Your great kindness to me, makes me now, in unison with your many friends in Ohio, wish you again many blessings and every success.

I am, dear Mr. Gibson,

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

MARTIN L. MURPHY,

Formerly of Springfield.

P. S. My best wishes and regards to Mrs. Gibson and the dear boy.

There are also a number of newspaper clippings, from which I have selected the following:

Saxby's tribute to Mr. "Billy" Gibson, whose headquarters will hereafter be in Baltimore, will find an echo in the hearts of all who have listened to Mr. Gibson's inimitable wit. Saxby says: "As an after-dinner speaker few local men can hold a candle to him. The Burns Club will lose its most influential member. Ohio will lose one of its most practical and painstaking knights of the rail, and many of us will be obliged to part with a good friend, an estimable companion and an all-round jolly, big-hearted fellow. May every good wish accompany him in his new field, and let him rest assured that his sojourn among us will never be forgotten by those he has left behind. Mrs. Gibson will also be greatly regretted by a devoted eircle of friends. She is a woman of rare wit and culture, and as a raconteuse, in a way as clever as her husband."

\* \* \* \*

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Gibson left for Baltimore last week. Their P. P. C. cards were received with genuine regret by their many friends, who send after them their best wishes and the refrain of the old song, "Say not adieu but au revoir." Mrs. Gibson is a high-bred type of the thorough gentlewoman. Some philosopher has said that women have no sense of humor; an hour with Mrs. Gibson would send his theories glimmering, for she has that faculty developed to a delightful degree. "Tips" envies Baltimore society the monopoly of Mrs. Gibson.

\* \* \* \*

### GIBSON'S FAREWELL

It is harder for "Billy" Gibson, Superintendent of the Cincinnati and Sandusky Divisions of the *Big Four*, to break away than he thought it would be when he decided to go with the

#### Author's Note:

Candor requires me to say that my *extemporaneous* speeches are always carefully prepared.

## LEAVE CINCINNATI

*B. & O.* He has a very loyal set of men on his two divisions, and before leaving he mailed to each the following farewell:

To the Employees of the Cincinnati and Sandusky Divisions:

I can not leave the service of this company without saying a word to you. Time is too short to permit of my seeing every man personally, and to meet any number of you in a body would be embarrassing. To me it would be painful.

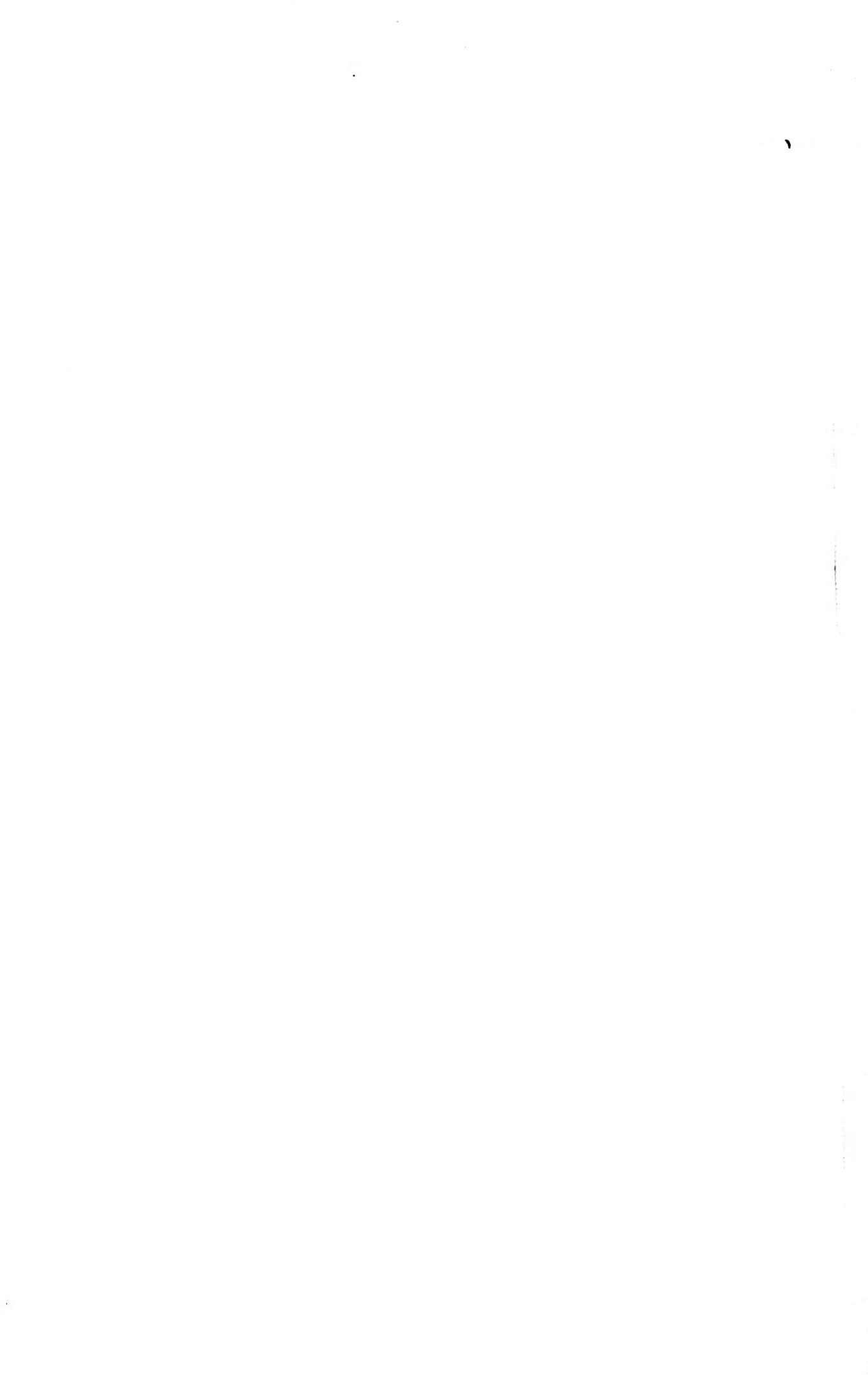
Therefore, I take this opportunity to say that, much as I regret to leave my friends and neighbors here, much as I regret to leave my brother officers, with all of whom my relations have been so cordial, I should leave unsaid what is, perhaps, nearest my heart were I not to tell you that I regret more to leave my men—the train despatchers, the yard-masters, the bridgemen, the enginemen, the track-men, the agents, the conductors, the clerks, the operators, the brakemen, the firemen—all the honest, stout-hearted men who have so loyally supported me, and to whose efforts I owe whatever measure of successs I may have attained. Your splendid discipline has made everything possible.

To say that I thank you, is to say nothing. I thank you a thousand times over. To every man I bid a kindly and affectionate good-bye.

WILLIAM GIBSON.







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